

Welcome to E-Kit! Charri

Vermont Conference



January 3, 2018

Dear Friends,

During the fall months, many of our churches have Stewardship Campaigns. These are the times when a congregation looks over the past year and looks toward the coming year. It is a time of discernment about what God has been doing in their midst - what work may have been completed - and what new opportunities and challenges are presenting themselves. Congregations ask the question - 'What resources will be needed for us to engage in faithful ministry and mission?' Often it is primarily a time for each individual and family to re-commit financial support for the ministry of the church - and a time to choose where each person will commit their time and energy - the 'sweat equity' - in particular responsibilities for the life and health of the congregation.

We have turned the page on 2017. Often people feel like a New Year, a new school year, a new birth year offer fresh beginnings. But as people of faith - every new day - ever new breath - is an opportunity to make choices. One definition of STEWARD is: 'a person who manages another's property or financial affairs; one who administers anything as the agent of another or others.' Perhaps it is easiest for us to think of our care of and for God's good creation to be an important area of stewardship.

But think a bit more deeply - as followers of Jesus Christ - the church is called to manage the affairs of God - to hold the Gospel as a precious treasure that must be invested in this world so that it takes root and bears fruit for the healing of bodies and souls.

So consider that as stewards of God's affairs, our responsibilities are not just for the work of a local church - or Conference or denomination. Our responsibility as disciples of Jesus is to make room for Jesus in our lives. To be a steward of God's affairs means that we must bring our faith to bear on all our decisions about how we will engage with the world - at work, at school, in our stewardship of our neighbors and our communities.

This is a world that squeezes God out in multiple ways. As stewards of God's affairs, it means that our eyes and ears need to always be acutely aware that God is always present in ways that others may be blind and deaf to. As stewards we are to actively pay attention to the smallest hints that God - yes, is present - always. And then ask how God wants us to be a partner in what God is doing.

Mordechai asked his niece, Esther, when faced with the death and devastation of her people - 'Perhaps you were born for such a time as this.' I think that everyone is always born 'for such a time as this' - whatever time that is. We are stewards of God's affairs in this time - in this place. We are stewards of God's Word made flesh. Perhaps the most important work for us in 2018 is to be stewards of God's Word that tells the story of all that God has done - and all that God wants of us and for us and with us. And then let that Word abide in us so deeply that it becomes embodied in all we say and do and think.

What an amazing responsibility God's has given us. May God bless us one day with the words - 'Well done, good and faithful stewards.'

Pam Lucas

VT CONFERENCE NEWS

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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....

Please keep Alan Baer, Sherry Bear's husband and their family in your prayers as his surgery was moved up to this week.

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**BECOME A FRIEND OF THE VERMONT CONFERENCE**

[Here...](#)



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWS

## [NEWS HEADLINES](#)

**UCC taps California minister as 3 Great Loves ambassador**  
A local pastor, inspired by the United Church of Christ's one-church mission initiative, hopes to help connect ideas and resources in the denomination's effort to build a just world for all people.

**UCC clergy recognized for making a difference in 2017**  
Two United Church of Christ pastors have been recognized in their home communities for their efforts toward making the world a more just place for all.

**Commentary: Do New Year's Resolutions Actually Help Anyone?**  
Growing up, my siblings and I made many New Year's resolutions at the closing of each year.

**Ohio congregation expresses love of neighbor with Family Promise**  
It's hard not to have a place to call home, especially at the holidays. But an Ohio church, living into the UCC's 3 Great Loves initiative, is ministering to neighboring families in their time of need.

**Commentary: "Not in Our Town"**  
May the hope and promise of this season, of a just world for all, inspire us to take action and send a clear message to those who would perpetuate hate and violence, "Not in our town, not in our state, not in our country, not in our world."



## [WEEKLY SEEDS](#)

Focus Reading:

Luke 2:22-40

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th century

"To the poet, to the philosopher, to the saint, all things are friendly and sacred, all events profitable, all days holy, all men divine."

Annie Dillard, For the Time Being, 20th century

"There is no less holiness at this time - as you are reading this - than there was on the day the Red Sea parted, or that day in the 30th year, in the 4th month, on the 5th day of the month as Ezekiel was a captive by the river Cheban, when the heavens opened and he saw visions of god. There is no whit less enlightenment under the tree at the end of your street than there was under Buddha's tree. In any instant the sacred may wipe you with its finger. In any instant the bush may flare, your feet may rise, or you may see a bunch of souls in trees."

Lailah Gifty Akita, 21st century

"Each new day on earth is a sacred moment."

Oswald Chambers, 20th century

"One of the greatest strains in life is the strain of waiting for God."

Henry David Thoreau, 19th century

"None are so old as those who have outlived enthusiasm."

Soren Kierkegaard, 19th century

"Purity of heart is to will one thing."

**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.*

**BE THE CHURCH**

**HAPPENINGS**

United Church of Christ  
New England Women's

*Celebration* 

**A SEAT AT THE TABLE**  
Come for all things are now ready.  
- Luke 14:17b

 **SAVE THE DATE!**  
**APRIL 6 - 8, 2018**  
Portland, Maine

---> 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.



*More than "Thoughts and Prayers"...*

*We can respond to the violence  
and hate in our world in a different way.  
Come and be a part of a different response!  
Come to learn, practice, and experiment  
with the power of creative nonviolence  
to transform our lives and our world.*

*From violence to wholeness...*

**Training in Nonviolence**  
**Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend**  
**Sunday, January 14 - Monday, January 15, 2018**

**Sunday, January 14, 2018**

**Session 1 – Exploring Nonviolent Power - 3 - 6 p.m.**  
**DINNER - 6 p.m.**  
**Martin Luther King, Jr. Worship Service - 7 p.m.**

**Monday, January 15, 2018**

**PANCAKE BREAKFAST - 8 a.m.**  
**Session 2 – Structural Violence and Nonviolent Power 9 a.m.– noon**  
**LUNCH - Noon**  
**Session 3 – Putting Nonviolent Power into Action - 1- 4 p.m.**

**Grace Congregational UCC**  
**8 Court St. Rutland, VT 05701**

**All Welcome! Registration is appreciated**  
**by calling 802-775-4301 or email: [graceucc@gracechurchvt.org](mailto:graceucc@gracechurchvt.org)**

**Suggested donation:**

**\$25 for entire weekend's activities; \$10 per session; \$5 each meal**

*Let's be part of an unprecedented movement-of-movements for a culture of  
nonviolence free from war, poverty, racism, and environmental catastrophe.*

This event is sponsored by the Southwest Association  
within the VTCUCC, in cooperation with Pace e Bene,  
Campaign Nonviolence, Global Meetinghouse Enterprises,  
Americans Take Action, [longshotproductions.org](http://longshotproductions.org), [SolarFest.org](http://SolarFest.org) and [GrassrootsSolar.com](http://GrassrootsSolar.com)

**pace e bene**  
**peace+all good**

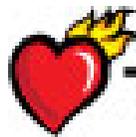
**THE PEACEMAKERS' PULPIT NEEDS YOU!**

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

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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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