



**E-Kit
September 9, 2020**

DONATE

Clergy need each other right now!

We will be having our Annual Clergy Convocation next week on Sept. 14-15th, and for the first time ever, we will be doing it virtually! Noted pastor and author Barbara Lemmel will be speaking to us about “How to stay Centered during a Time of Deep Change.” We will also have many opportunities as clergy to get to know one another better. You can find the schedule and all the details at the Vermont Conference website.

**Register for
Clergy Convocation**

The deadline for signing up is Friday at 8:00 a.m., so first of all, I encourage all clergy to join us! We already have a good group of 37, and we would love to welcome more. This is not a time for us to stay in our own different silos—we need each other right now! I read in a recent report about the large number of clergy who are dealing with significant stress and anxiety in their lives and ministries, which I assume is probably the case in many other occupations as well. This topic is especially relevant for us, as Barbara will be sharing about spiritual practices that can be helpful for us in continuing to stay grounded and open to God.

And if you are a lay person reading this, I encourage you to ask your pastor about whether they are going to Convocation. Clergy sometimes feel guilty about doing things beyond the parish, but it will be beneficial to them and to your church that they do so! Effective ministry depends on creativity, and creativity is fed by new ideas and connections with other pastors and new ways of thinking and doing. I ask you too to pray for Convocation, that the Holy Spirit may be at work in our time together.

Faithfully yours,
Paul

Black Lives Matter

Summer Forum Series: Is There a Path to Racial Reconciliation?

After over 400-years of history and oppression toward people of color, is there a path to racial reconciliation? Join us as we explore this important question in a Virtual Forum Series, each Sunday at 9 AM beginning Sunday, July 19th. Our guest speakers will present a wide range of perspectives and knowledge to inspire our discussion.

This discussion series is presented by members and friends of Good Shepherd

Lutheran Church of Jericho, United Church of Bakersfield and Fairfield, Waterville Union Church, and Second Congregational Church in Jeffersonville.

Facilitators: Pastor Arnold Thomas (Good Shepherd) and Pastor Devon Thomas (Jeffersonville, Waterville and Bakersfield).

Learn more and attend the forum series at: <https://jeffchurchvt.org/summer-forum-series/>

Read Fredrick Douglass' famous speech regarding the celebration of American independence

[Click here for the statement from the Vermont Conference staff, Board and ministers living and serving in Vermont](#)

Beginning conversations about race and white privilege

Has your church begun an education or reflection program about white privilege and systemic racism? If so, tell the Conference about what you are doing so we can highlight your program.

Contact the Conference at vermontconference@gmail.com to tell us about the programs you are doing and the journey you have begun.

- Old South Church in Windsor continues to hold weekly vigils on Wednesday evenings 6-6:30 followed by 30 minute discussions about local racial inequality issues.
- Mallets Bay Congregational Church has been holding a book study of *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James H. Cone.
- The United Church of Strafford helped launch a town-wide discussion forum about race and being an anti-racist.
- Newfane Congregational Church has been using the UCC curriculum for examining white privilege.

Say their names...

Each week, we will publish names of our sisters and brothers of the Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities who have been murdered by police and/or white supremacists.

Shantel Davis - 23, shot by NYPD officer who claimed she was attempting to escape.

Kenneth Johnson - 60, denied medical care in custody of Vermont Dept. of Corrections ([more information here](#))

Rekia Boyd - 22, shot in back of the head by off-duty Chicago police officer

Jacob Blake - 29, tased and shot seven times in the back in Kenosha, WI. He remains hospitalized.

The UCC and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

The American Missionary Association, a predecessor body of the United Church of Christ, was a visionary organization dedicated to education and racial equality. The AMA founded six colleges that continue to relate to the UCC Council for Higher Education. These schools are historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and are racially diverse, welcoming students from a wide range of races and ethnicities.

- Dillard University, New Orleans, LA; www.dillard.edu
- Fisk University, Nashville, TN; www.fisk.edu
- Huston-Tillotson University, Austin, TX; www.htu.edu
- LeMoyne-Owen College, Memphis, TN; www.loc.edu
- Talladega College, Talladega, AL; www.talladega.edu
- Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, MS; www.tougaloo.edu

Do you know of protests and rallies that are taking place?

Have you attended protests, vigils or rallies? Please let the Vermont Conference know about them so we can post them on our website and social media. Email them to Jesse at vermontconference@gmail.com

- Silent Vigil Against Racism. It has been happening every Sunday afternoon from 1:00 to 1:30 p.m. in Arlington on Route 7A in front of St. James' Episcopal Church that the Federated Church of East Arlington is participating in. Folks are asked to mask, are spaced 6 feet apart and encouraged to bring signs. All are welcome to join!



Our Faith, Our Vote, Our Voice: A call to the Church to be a place of civil dialogue that builds community

[Our Faith, Our Vote resources](#)

Racism in America symposiums



[Watch the videos of Racism in America series](#)

Fall Leadership Fest - Save the Date!

The Vermont Conference will be holding its first annual Lay Training Event on October 24th from 8:45 to noon. This will be held virtually on ZOOM.

Our training sessions will consider:

- Pastoral relations committees
- Youth programming development
- Racial justice in our churches and communities
- Stewardship in the pandemic era

Stay tuned for more information about our instructors and registration.

Reminder

Your local church needs your financial support more

than ever. If you have been fortunate to still be employed please consider making regular gifts to your church. Your congregation is doing vital ministry through online or written worship opportunities, caring for one another, feeding hungry people and fighting for justice. Summer is always a slow time in terms of giving, but the church expenses stay steady.



Please also remember the Vermont Conference. We need the support of our congregations and friends so we can continue to resource pastors and congregations through these strange and important days.

Thank you so much!

Holding space for difficult conversations

How do we have difficult conversations - whether about race, finances or anything else - within our congregations and people with differing perspectives? College Street Congregational Church developed "Communication Guidelines to Strengthen Our Community" and have kindly shared it for other churches to consider. The Vermont Conference Annual Meeting also adopts "A Covenant for Dialog" at the beginning of each Annual Meeting. Please feel free to use these documents in your local church.

Download College Street Congregational Church: "Communications Guidelines to Strengthen Our Church"

Download Vermont Conference Annual Meeting: "A Covenant for Dialog"

A promotional graphic for a web seminar series. At the top, it says "United Church of Christ Church Building Loan Fund Present: BUILDING CHURCH DIFFERENTLY". There are icons of a church building, a smartphone, and a tablet. Below this, it says "Partners in Building 2020 Web Seminar Series" and "Registration Opening Soon!". The dates and topics are: "September 17th 'MAKE AN IMPACT'", "September 24th 'LEAD WITH TECHNOLOGY'", and "October 1st 'TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES'". At the bottom, it says "Three 90 minute power-packed webinars 2PM - 3:30PM EDT \$25.00 total cost." There are small photos of people in the background.

**COVID - 19
Information &
Resources**

Are you holding services according to CDC protocols?

COVID-19 resources from the UCC Insurance Boards

Click the image above to learn more

**Register for
Clergy Convocation**

Clergy Convocation

The Convocation Planning Team met last week and decided that we will not have our annual Pastor's Convocation in September live, but will do it online. We decided to do this because of the feedback from many of you, who said that having a time to gather together as Vermont Conference clergy online would be helpful during these challenging times. Barbara Lemmel, Methodist pastor, consultant and spiritual director will be

our leader with the theme “How to stay Centered in a Time of Deep Change.”

We will begin with a session on Monday night, Sept. 14th with worship and time led by Barb focused on this time that we are in. There will be time for games and hanging out via ZOOM later in the evening. We will gather again on Tuesday morning, Sept. 15th for a time of worship and a session by Barb focused on how we can stay centered, and she will be sharing with us spiritual practices and disciplines that we can do ourselves that afternoon. We will conclude Tuesday evening with a session of sharing in groups our experience, and a closing worship with Communion.

Convocation will only cost \$25 (no matter how many sessions you attend), and we hope many clergy can join us! A brochure about Convocation and a way to register are on the Conference website. At this time in our church’s life, we especially need each other, so please set aside this time to be with others. It will be a memorable Convocation!

REGISTRATION CLOSSES AT 8:00 A.M. ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH.

NY School of Ministry (NYSOM) Fall Courses open **Featuring Supply Preaching certificate program**

The New York Conference's School of Ministry (NYSOM) fall course listing is available and features the Supply Preacher Certification Program. This program is designed especially for lay members who feel called to preaching at churches when their pastors are away or while they are transitioning between pastors.

Click the buttons below for more information.

**Supply Preacher Certification
Program**

NYSOM Fall Course offerings

Kipah, Kufi, and Collar

As part of an interfaith effort at modeling peace, Rabbi Amy Small of Ohavi Zedek, Imam Islam Hassan of the Islamic Society of Vermont, and Pastor Ken White of College Street Congregational Church in Burlington have released a podcast called “Kipah, Kufi, and Collar”. Each 30 minute segment starts with Amy, Islam, and Ken having a conversation about an everyday issue (week 1 is “how to deal with difficult people”) and then interviewing a local figure about that same topic (week 1’s guest is former Vermont Governor, U.S. Ambassador, professor and author Madeline Kunin). New episodes are available every Monday.

You can access it at kipahkufiandcollar.com or you can look for it on Spotify (<https://open.spotify.com/show/0MpaNQRVMA1claeP2y5Ot0>), iTunes (<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/kipah-kufi-collar/id1523653268>) or wherever you access podcasts.

Curating services and sermons for pastor vacations

Would you be willing to share your sermons or services with others in the Conference, so that they might use them on a Sunday they want to take off? Let Jesse in the Conference office know if you would be willing to do that, and we will list all the churches in the Conference that encourage you to use sermons and services in Ekit. Then you can simply go to their website and use them with their permission. Thanks!

Lancaster Seminary accepting Doctor of Ministry applicants

As a Seminary, we continue to adapt to the needs and realities of these times, as we prepare faith leaders for ministry in a complex and ever-changing world. [We are still accepting applications for the Doctor of Ministry.](#)

Due to COVID-19, our Doctor of Ministry will look a little different, but will still offer the same high-quality educational experience. For the upcoming semester, the one-week intensive has moved to a completely online format (through Zoom). Also, additional classes are scheduled periodically throughout the semester to maintain the cohort experience and ensure academic accountability. I would be happy to meet with anyone you know that might be interested in starting their Doctor of Ministry this Fall.

Spiritual Direction

By popular request, a list of Spiritual Directors is now available. [Download the list here.](#)

Pastoral Transitions

- Rev. Elisa Lucozzi has been called as Pastor of the Guilford Community Church. She will succeed Rev. Lise Sparrow who is retiring.
- Rev. Leigh McCaffrey has been called as Pastor of the Barre Congregational Church.
- Rev. Mark Wilson has been called as Pastor of Waitsfield United Church Christ. His ministry will begin in October.
- Lava Mueller was ordained by the Windsor-Orange Association on August 21st.

[Click here for full list of transitions](#)

Prayers and Thanksgivings

Please hold Rev. Kurt Shaffert in your prayers as he holds vigil with his mother who is in hospice.

Please hold Rev. Margo Marrone in your prayers as she and her family mourn the sudden passing of her husband Tom Marrone.

Please hold our Black, Indigenous and other people of color (BIPOC) sisters and brothers murdered by police and white supremacists in your prayers. Say their names...

Please hold health care workers and first responders in your prayers as they stand on the front lines responding to COVID-19.

Useful Links

- [UCC Newsfeeds](#)
- [UCC Weekly Seeds](#)
- [2020 Tax preparation resources](#)
- [Pension Boards rate calculator](#)
- [UCC Yearbook](#)
- [Stewardship blog](#)

Who should I contact for...?

- Conference Minister: Rev. Lynn Bujnak
 - bujnakl@vtcucc.org
- Assoc. Conference Minister: Rev. Paul Sangree
 - sangreep@vtcucc.org
- Search & Call, operations, events: Jesse Davis
 - vtcoordinator2018@gmail.com
- Finance: Tanya Frazier
 - vtcfinanceucc@gmail.com
- E-Kit postings
 - vermontconference@gmail.com

Resources from the Vermont Conference website (click the buttons below)

**Search & Call
Resources**

**Lay Ministry
Openings**

Visit our partners



Worship
Well

Original worship resources
for local churches...
because Sunday's coming.
[Website](#)



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