



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

A Message from PCC

February 5, 2020

Dear Friends of Penn Central Conference -

“Nearly all [people] can stand adversity, but if you want to test a [person’s] character, give [them] power.” Abraham Lincoln

Today is Abe Lincoln’s birthday. I remember it every year because it is also my father’s birthday – whose middle name is Lincoln as a result. And Lincoln is a good person on whom to ground my thinking this week because I have been reflecting a great deal about power and the uses of power. I was intrigued by the quote from Lincoln because we often think that it is adversity that shows evidence of one’s character. However, when we are in positions of power the true shape and contours of our character become evident. Those around us can see how we manage power, how we use it to the betterment or detriment of others, and whether we share it. Our character is thereby revealed.

In my work with clergy I recognize that clergy have tremendous power – although some would disagree. Yes, we feel powerless at times, even undermined and thwarted. Yet in a general sense the role of clergy is a profoundly powerful one. For example, we speak works about spiritual truths and about how God acts in the world. We share insights into sin, grace, and redemption. For many of our church members, those are the only words they hear related to the spiritual realm. We also tend to see and stand beside people in their most vulnerable times. There are times when we hold the hearts of others in our hands. That is holy ground and deeply powerful.

The apostle Paul spoke of power in a

Outdoor Ministries

Upcoming Retreats:

Marriage in the Later Years of Life with Dave & Anne Bushnell- March 2 - 4
Countdown To Opening Day (Fishing, of course!) with Dave Bushnell & Friends - March 16 - 18
Confirmation Retreat - March 27 - 29
What is Good Leadership? with Rev. Dr. Carrie Call - April 14 - 15
Learning to See - A Photography Retreat with Nelson Dodson - April 27 - 29
Pride Retreat for LGBTQ Folks & Allies - May 29-31 (details to come)

SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION IS OPEN! Early bird pricing for those who pay in full before March 31, 2020. Learn more and register at <https://hartmancenter.com/summer-camp/>

Prayers for Penn Central Conference

Ephesians 6:18 (NLT)

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

This week, we pray for each other as we continue to live into God's calling...

St. Paul's UCC, Dallastown

Zion (Stone Valley) UCC, Dalmatia

Shiloh UCC, Danville

Saint James UCC, Danville

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Message from the Conference cont'

variety of settings. Jesus did as well. And the words were always challenging, since they pressed up against the wider world's examples of power. Our power is not that of armies, riches, fame, or political influence. Disciples are meant to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, but the focus of that power is healing, preaching good news, breaking the yokes that encumber, and building one another up in love. In his letter to the Philippians, chapter 2, Paul writes, "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." This brief reminder from Paul tells us that authentic and empowered followers of Jesus use their power to uphold and stand in solidarity with others. The power we wield flows out from us to empower and lift others. The misuse of power is known by its fruits: self-aggrandizement, division, finger-pointing, self-justification, and oppression.

Consider carefully your own gift of power. Lincoln used his to bring a divided nation together. He was not perfect by any means, and history is messy and complicated. Yet his character was evident in how he used his power. As disciples we have a responsibility to ask ourselves, what do people learn about our character by how we use our power?

Peace,

Carrie

Upcoming Events

Stony the Road: A Musical Journey Celebrating African American History with Kellie Turner - Lancaster Theological Seminary, Santee Chapel - February 16, 4:00PM

February 22 - ONA Winter Gathering at Colonial Park UCC, Harrisburg PA - 9:30AM-3:00PM

Stephen Ministry Introductory Workshop - Palm Lutheran Church, Palmyra - March 14, 9:00AM - 1:00PM

Mended Heart Lenten Concert/Potluck - Salem UCC, Elizabethville - March 15 - 3:00pm

PLANNING AHEAD:

York Association Earth Day Anniversary Weekend

w/ Jim Antal - Mt. Zion UCC, York - April 18, 9:00AM

Annual Meeting - June 12-13, 2020

Event with Bishop Robert Schnase & Recognition Dinner - September 19, 2020 (info to come!)

Around the conference:

DVD Lending Library - St. John's UCC, Chambersburg, manager@sjucc1811.org or phone (717) 263-8593.

Free Choir Robes - Emmanuel UCC, Hanover

Emmanuel UCC has 36 choir robes (made in the US by E.R. Moore.) They are green, in a traditional style, gathered yoke, front zip with stoles. Call Emmanuel UCC at 717-632-8281 for details.

Looking for Bells - Church of the Apostles, Waynesboro Narda Druckenmiller is looking for a 2 Octave set of Hand-bells that another church may not be using or willing to sell. Contact Narda at 717-994-4614

Looking to borrow - A congregational set of "Unbinding Your Heart" by Martha Grace Reese. If your church has a set to lend, contact Hamilton Park UCC, Lancaster (717) 397-9791

Sign up for our eNews—click the link at pccucc.org!

Contact us!

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