PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

December 13, 2023

Members and Friends of Penn Central Conference,

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light." John 1:6-8

Advent is my favorite season in the church year! My spirit really appreciates the elongated waiting, the reminders to watch and wait for the already, again, and not yet of Emmanuel. I love the patience necessary within me to stay in the lectionary narratives of being always ready, watchful, prepared. This week's passage from John's gospel is also a reminder of what I'm supposed to be doing in this season - pointing to the Light.

I can sometimes get a little selfish in Advent when I am super focused on my interior preparation. And while my heart and life do need to be prepared for the breaking in of Emmanuel again, I need to tell this story to others, to invite them into the watchfulness and patience that I am practicing - into the very Light that I know, and that I know is coming still.

When I was a little girl, my grandmother read me a little book that I have since learned is a simple poem by Helen Steiner Rice, The Christmas Guest. In the story, Conrad the Cobbler was told in a dream that Jesus would come to visit him the next day. He woke up and cleaned and prepared his shop and home for the visit. He then heard a knock at the door only to see an old beggar. He welcomed the beggar in and even gave him some shoes but only visited for a short while as he was expecting another guest. Later his heart leapt when another knock came only to find an older

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Contact us!

PCC Office Staff

Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, PhD - *Conference Minister*
email: ccall@pccucc.org / Phone: 717-433-3196

Rev. Dr. Nora Driver Foust - *Associate Conference Minister*
email: nfoust@pccucc.org / Phone: 717-433-2587

Rev. Rick Luciotti - *Facilitator of Care to Clergy and Clergy Families*
email: rluciotti@gmail.com / Phone: 717-433-6306

C. Paul Keller - *Office Manager*
email: pkeller@pccucc.org / Phone: 717-652-1560

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. Lukes UCC, Dalmatia

St Pauls UCC, Manheim

Canoe Camp UCC, Mansfield

Zion UCC, Marietta



lady selling sticks and in need of a place to rest. Conrad fed her and gave her clothing but said his guest room was reserved for another guest. He soon sent this guest away too in anticipation of his real guest. Another knock came from a crying child who had gotten lost out in the cold woods. Conrad warmed the child and helped them find home. That evening he asked Jesus why he did not come, and Jesus shared that he had come three times.

That is exactly how the inner preparations of the season might be manifest in the world. Am I feeding, clothing, sheltering, assisting? Am I doing it in Christ's name and not for Nora's (or the UCC's) glory? Bearing witness to the light of Christ is more than words and emphasizes the importance of kindness, charity, and love toward one another.

So as you go about the hustle and bustle of the season, preparing, watching, and waiting, go ahead and spread the Light of Christ, too! Help someone. Clothe someone. Feed someone. Love someone. Be kind to someone. All in the name of the Christ Child that is coming again.

Shalom,

Nora

Rev. Dr. Nora Foust

Associate Conference Minister

Penn Central Conference

Camp Director Pastor Alice shares, "please mark your calendar for next year's **HC Spirit camp at Hartman Center Campground and Retreat Center** - Sunday, July 28th through Saturday, August 3rd, 2024.

God's Dance Party
Hartman Center Winter Retreat
January 12th-14th $100

Attention youth and youth leaders (if you're not a youth leader, please pass this on to whoever works with the youth or communicates with the youth in your church):

Are you in 6th to 12th grade? Looking for a break after the Christmas season? Want to get away from your family for a couple days? Missing Hartman Center?

We can help! Come party with us at our winter youth retreat from January 12 to 14. We'll be at Hartman Center in Hartman lodge (formerly Micheaux lodge) and maybe some cabins. You can't beat the price. Use code PCC2024 for a 50% campership.

Register now and tell your friends to register too.

https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/hc-winter-youth-retreat-2024

Camp makes a great Christmas gift. Check out the summer options from our partners at Lutheran Camping Corporation's Kirchenwald (and Nawakwa)

https://www.lutherancamping.org/summer-camp/youth-summer-programs/