

PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.



A Message from PCC

May 25, 2022

When my heart is broken and I have run out of prayers, I give thanks and find comfort in the raging words of the psalmist and Hebrew prophets. Here are two I have been crying out with today as I ponder just how long we can continue to lament a world in chaos. Your conference staff join in prayer with each of you as we see more loss of life to gun violence, both in Buffalo and Uvalde.

Psalm 13:1-3a

How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?
Look on me and answer, Lord my God.

Habakkuk 1:2-3

How long, Lord, must I call for help,
but you do not listen?
Or cry out to you, "Violence!"
but you do not save?
Why do you make me look at injustice?
Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?
Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and conflict abounds.

Members and friends of Penn Central Conference,

"I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me." - John 17: 23

In the lessons following Easter we view the disciples growing from a fearful and tentative gathering of believers and toward a more unified, confi-

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Contact us!

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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.

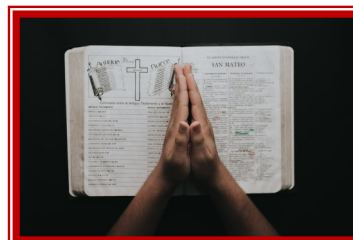
This week, we pray for each other as we continue to live into God's calling...

St. John's UCC, Red Lion

Richfield UCC, Richfield

Grace UCC, Richland

St. Paul's UCC, Sacramento



dent and trusting movement. Jesus prayerful petition, which we read in John's gospel, is clearly coming to fruition. I think the first aspect of this transition was in the unity Christ called for. Even when Peter appears to have decided to just go home and return to fishing, we see that the others went along with him. And whether their decision to follow Peter was, 'misery loves company' or some other motive, they remained together. From this, Jesus was able to heal their wounded spirits and prepare them for the Holy Spirit's inspiration.

In some ways this is a lesson for each of us as we begin to emerge from devastation of the Covid experience and cultural divisions impacted what we traditionally regarded as church. Fear, frustration and even doubt have confronted our spirits. There have been many declarations that things will never again be what they used to be. Laments regarding attendance and lethargic, complacent attitudes often dominate conversations. Again, the refrain, "Well, it used to be" prevails.

Frankly, the good ship 'used to be' sailed a long time ago. The world continues to change and in far too many cases the church and its members have chosen not to adapt. Unlike the disciples, many have drifted away from unity and into a singular approach. We must always recall Christ's pray of, "I in them and you in me." The Holy Spirit continues to offer the breath of life to renew efforts to adapt. This promise will be enhanced by greater efforts at unity.

We are to be a movement of persons possessing various gifts. The coming of God's Holy Spirit is not simply to confer authority. It is as importantly inspiration to become ever more faithful disciples worshipping and working together to more effectively love God and neighbor. In this way, together, we can better develop consensus around the theme of becoming ever more loving, creating and learning communities of faith.

Yes, we are not yet completely out of the woods from Covid, but that does not mean striving to become more unified as community is not possible. "It used to be..." and similar phrases offer no

hope. "What might yet be", is what we can be stating as an open invitation to grow with others. Like the disciples, it means putting aside preconceived notions, old bias and stale patterns of behavior and allowing the breath of the Holy Spirit to again breathe on us.

Rick

Rev. Rick Luciotti

Coordinator of Clergy Care

PCC's 60th Annual Meeting

"Mission In Focus"

"See, the former things have come to pass and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them." - Isaiah 42:9

Opening Plenary: 6:30PM, June 6, 2022

Workshops: 6:30PM, June 7-9, 2022

Business & Worship: 9:00AM, June 11, 2022

<https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/penn-central-conference-annual-meeting-2022>

The Virtual Choir invites you to join us for a virtual anthem for the Penn Central Conference annual meeting. We'll be singing the Podd Brothers' arrangement of More Love, Somewhere, which was actually arranged for Virtual Choir. You don't have to be a regular member of the choir to join us for this piece. If you want to sing at the annual meeting, email Julie Holm, julie@bvfof.org, or call her at (814) 349-5515.

HC Spirit Week - What's in a Name?

"Naming and Claiming Who God Made Us to Be"

Saturday, August 6 through Friday, August 12

Camp Mt. Luther

<https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/hc-spirit-week>

Learn more about camping opportunities
here: <https://pccucc.org/outdoor-ministry/>