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**SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND**

**Seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened,**

**Ask and it shall be given, and the love comes a tumblin' down....**

This camp song has long been a favorite for me, as much for the invocation of Jesus' words from Matthew 7 as for its musicality. **ASK, SEEK, KNOCK**. In my work as Designated Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Discernment, Jesus' invitation to an open heart of prayerful anticipation is invaluable.

Congregation leaders have been embracing the [new Local Church Profile](http://www.ucc.org/ministers_search-and-call) as they travel through the search and call process. The format is an invitation to creatively share the story of the congregation and its mission, issuing an invitation to knock to ministers seeking a call. The digital nature of the Profile is an opportunity to see this portrait of the congregation as ministerial candidates will see it.

For congregations large and small, the process can be energizing and fun. From the raw data of the Word profile, editing the flow of text and sharpening the presentation of photos allows profile creators to begin to imagine the final document. When the final polished pdf is ready for distribution, there is great rejoicing. As one Profile Committee member put it, working through the profile process "made me fall in love with my church all over again."

Videos are accompanying the profiles as well. The process of creating the video can often stir the excitement of congregation members about their ministry and remind them of the many ways they make a difference in their community. Another Profile Committee used fictional characters to help describe aspects of their congregation, inviting ministerial candidates to help them continue to write their story. Wow!  Going forward, I can envision some of our congregations making use of the Three Great Loves initiative to share their story as well.

Green is in, and a wonderful way to care for the Earth! I am thrilled to share that we have substantially reduced our use of paper throughout the Search process as well. Since the advent of the new Local Church profile, the Search and Call manual (the big green binder of the past) was rendered outdated. It was decided that we would make use of digital resources as often as possible. At initial meetings with congregations beginning a transition, leaders are given a flash drive with many of the needed resources for their process going forward. Many of these resources are also available on the UCC website for download. Those that are specific to Penn Central Conference are available upon request via email.

You can clearly see how congregations in transition in the Penn Central Conference are letting their creativity flow as they follow the Spirit's leadings throughout the search process. Wait! There's more! The Local Church Profile can be used as a tool for future planning and imagining together, through engaging the Discovery Document. The Discovery Document are the three sections of the profile that ask WHO ARE WE NOW, WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR, and WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BE. I am certainly available to meet with leadership at your church to share the value of asking these questions every few years!

Blessings, dear friends in Christ, as you ask, seek and knock in the energy of the Holy Spirit. May you celebrate Christ's love as it tumbles down to us and through us!

Betsy