

PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

A Message from PCC

Dear Friends and Members of Penn Central Conference,

*For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.*

Psalm 36:9 (NRSV)

With God is the fountain of life. As I read this week's lectionary passages, this phrase just grabbed me by the heart. Life has felt a little more like a shallow tub most days over the past couple years. Even when we have glimpses of what life after the pandemic might look like, a fountain of life if you will, a new variant comes along that dramatically changes the moment and the vision. There are moments of fountain life, exploring new natural spaces with my family, some worship experiences brought only because of the forced changes to our worship practices and even some zoom prayer meetings. But they have felt more like the moving fountains at the splash park, unpredictable, than like the fountain of life I remember in the before-times.

I don't think of myself as one who wants to return to life as it was, we have learned too much to do that, but I do long for the ever-flowing fountain of life I think I remember. How do we claim both?

In the mail this week I received a little book of "post-pandemic ponderments" from the UCC's StillSpeaking Writers Group. The national setting has mailed this out to all active authorized ministers in their database according to the enclosed letter. I love questions and the personal and collective journeys that search for answers so this little book was right up my alley. "What if?" the title asks.

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Outdoor Ministries

CHICKEN & WAFFLES at Nawakwa

Sunday, January 16 from Noon-2:00 p.m. Spend a Sunday at camp with a delicious home-made chicken and waffles meal. Bring your sleds if there's snow! There is no cost for this meal, but a free will offering will be taken.

WINTER FUN DAYS at Kirchenwald

Sundays, January 16 and February 20 from 1:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Bring your family or youth group and enjoy an afternoon on Kirchenwald's award-winning toboggan run, ice-skating on the lake, or drinking hot chocolate in the lodge.

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.

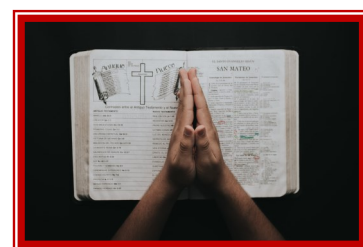
This week, we pray for each other as we continue to live into God's calling...

St. Paul's (Gowen City) UCC, Shamokin

Faith UCC, Grantville

Grace UCC, Greencastle

Emmanuel UCC, Hanover



Message from the Conference cont'

* What if the Church was fun (like, actual fun, like weird-Zoom-call fun)?

* What if you spent as much time thinking about spiritual and emotional lives as you spent thinking about physical bodies during the pandemic?

- What if God is transforming your pandemic pains into something new: faithful creativity, radical flexibility, hospitable fearlessness?

- What if the pandemic exposed new insights into biblical stories?

In the 20 minutes I spent with these questions and others in the book I could see the fountain of life again! I could see consistories wrestling with and for the faithful way forward for their congregation. I could hear clergy communities of practice seeking new understandings of call and pastoral identity in a new age. I pictured families gathered around the living room tv for church zoom game nights.

And in a flash, I was reminded that the fountain of life is with God and God is with us, even when I have to work to open myself to God's presence, God is with me. God is with you. And with God is the fountain of life. How will I see it today? How will you experience this fountain of life today? Tomorrow? How will your church?

Shalom,

Nora

Rev. Nora Foust
Associate Conference Minister
Penn Central Conference



Outdoor Ministries

"[Every]Body Of Christ"

Youth/Confirmation Retreat

March 18-20 at Camp Nawakwa, located near Gettysburg. The weekend will begin at 7:00 on Friday evening and end with a closing program at 10:00 on Sunday morning. Cost is \$100 for 2 nights of lodging and 4 meals (3 on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday)

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

We are now just over 2 months away from the first-in-several-years Winter Youth/Confirmation Retreat: "[Every]Body of Christ!" It will be a wonderful weekend full of fun activities, making new friends and being with old ones, learning and exploring, questioning and evaluating, relaxing and playing! As a reminder, this weekend away at Camp Nawakwa is for all Penn Central youth, grades 6-12! You are welcome to register anytime!

Ready to register now? Follow the link:

<https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/everybody-of-christ-confirmation-youth-retreat>

Contact us!

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