

Faith Connection Story – First Carlisle

First United Church of Christ in Carlisle embodies the new mission statement of the Penn Central Conference UCC which states *“where congregations passionately declare and demonstrate the courageous love of Christ.”* I believe the church (First UCC) which I am fortunate to serve demonstrates this statement in a variety of ways.

There are a number of projects that point to this statement. There are the various worship services that happen during the week: two services on Sunday as well the Sunset Vespers and Messy Church. There are the educational opportunities with adult Bible studies and educational classes for children adults.

The church has a long standing practice of showing generosity (offerings to the community and through the United Church of Christ) and hospitality (My Brother’s Table and Plaza events). There is the ministry and groups which reach out beyond the walls of the church (Mental Health Support group, Theology Pub. First UCC – Carlisle has on staff a community Chaplain, who focus is to connect with people beyond the walls of the church. Even the events that can be considered fellowship opportunities within the church calendar (Lunch Bunch, men’s group, weekday festival), the congregation walks a path of faith.

A long time ago when I was first starting seminary, I remember seeing a UCC bumper sticker which states *“to believe is to care. To care is to do.”* These words have stayed with me as I followed my call as a pastor. And I believe that message applies to first UCC – Carlisle and to the Penn Central Conference UCC.

