



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

A Message from PCC

Dear Friends and Members of Penn Central Conference,

And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown." - Luke 4:24

Some thoughts on St. Luke 4: 21-30

I believe Jesus' rejection by the hometown folk of Nazareth raises questions concerning the many cultural, political and social debates occurring today. How do we define what it means to be a person of faith? How are we to regard and respond to persons whose specific beliefs and practices differ our own? Are we ever justified in regarding others as unrighteous or treating them disrespectfully?

When considered thoughtfully, there exist many expressions of Christian thought and practices of which significant debate continues. One lesson I suggest we take from this gospel account is to be careful in answering those questions. How one treats others with differing viewpoints may well be how we ourselves are treated. Before anyone asks, I will here state what I am writing is far easier to put on paper than it is to put into practice.

Those gathered, as Jesus taught, assumed they were within God's inner circle and so had right to judge. Jesus' declaration makes evident such assumptions are unjustified. In quoting the prophets Isaiah, Elijah and Elisha Jesus announces a call for ever widening of the circle of inclusion, and to do so graciously. His illustrations of the widow and the enemy Naaman are presented as being among God's chosen. Clearly a bitter pill to swallow for those gathered and it appears to be the case for too many persons today.

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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)

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!

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

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...

Trinity UCC, Hallam

David's UCC, Herndon

St. Paul's UCC, Herndon

Zion UCC, Herndon



Message from the Conference cont'

When scripture challenges our personal cherished assumptions, as it did in this gospel account, many persons become resistive and even hostile. The people of Nazareth reacted by trying to make Jesus an outsider in their minds. Do we behave similarly toward persons with whom we disagree, especially when they behave toward us in a disagreeable manner? Despite the clear threat to his physical well-being, Jesus simply moved on. As tempting as it maybe and regardless the provocation we experience, are we ever justified in citing others as being unrighteous? Are we somehow ever exempt from the admonition, "None is righteous, no not one"?

I believe that by extension, our Lord's instruction herein is to further ask, "Are my attitudes and actions toward others helping to expand or to restrict the circle of inclusion"? So, before reacting to this evening's news or responding to someone with whom disagreement is strong, take a moment and meditate on St. Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 13: Love is patient and it is kind; love does not envy, nor does it boast; love is not proud and it is not rude; love is not self-seeking, nor is it easily roused to harsh reaction; love keeps no record of wrongs and does not delight in evil; love rejoices with the truth and always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres; love never gives up."

Rick

Rev. Rick Luciotti
Coordinator of Clergy Care
Penn Central Conference

Save the Dates:

PCC's 60th Annual Meeting

Opening Plenary: 6:30PM, June 6, 2022
Workshops: 6:30PM, June 7-9, 2022
Business & Worship: 9:30AM, June 11, 2022

JOIN THE MOVEMENT - United Church of Christ Launched at the 2022 General Synod, the Movement toward Racial Justice is an invitation to demonstrate God's love and to partner with others who are working for the transformation of racism in

our world so that we might foster flourishing lives for all. Check out the website at jointhemovementucc.org

Every setting of the UCC, from local churches to global partners, has a role to play in expanding our practices of antiracism and strengthening our capacities as partners and participants in the burgeoning racial justice movements of our time. In this effort, story-sharing is a key component. Our stories show us not only who we are, but also inspire who we may become. Providing opportunities to encounter the antiracism journeys of others, Join the Movement will be a hub for churches within the United Church of Christ of story-sharing that draws others to participate and opens hearts to new possibilities and practices of racial justice.

The Christian church began as a movement towards a just world through the teachings of Jesus. As followers of Jesus, we believe it is our mandate to work for and seek justice, love, and compassion, as we join with and become our own Spirit-led movements toward racial justice. Go to the website to learn what churches are doing, find antiracism resources, and identify local and national practices that are unjust.

Contact us!

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