



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



A Message from PCC

January 11, 2023

Greetings Members and Friends of Penn Central Conference,

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John." Matthew 3:13

Star words are all the buzz this time of year. (Lots of pastors write about them if you google star words.) Pastors and Congregation leaders all over are printing or writing intention words on star-shaped paper or sharing a star word generator so that each person will have a new word for 2023 to inspire them in Christian living, or new prayer practices, or in reflection on God through that word. One church I read about will draw a new star word each week of the Epiphany season and the whole congregation will use that word to guide their prayers, their thoughts, in a new way for that week. Another is combining it with Baptism of Jesus and putting words on cut out water-droplet shaped paper and creating a little pond in the sanctuary.

During Epiphany in 2021, Pastor Dani at Mount Zion in York sent me a gold star in a stark white envelope that said "motivation." I have returned to that star word a lot in the last 2 years. I think about the ways that I am called to be a motivator and to be motivation for others. This year I am seeking that star again in another way, motivation from within or beyond me to move myself out of the doldrums of post-Christmas.

This Sunday I will be at Mount Zion and will be preaching on this text about the baptism of Jesus. As I seek the gold star "motivation" and sit with this text this week, I wonder how I might hear Christ calling me today, in this season, and just how motivated I am to respond to Christ's call? What about

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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.

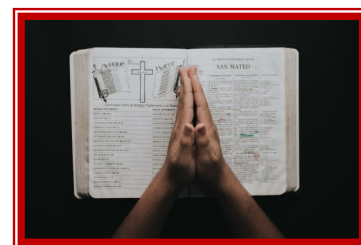
This week, we pray for each other as we continue to live into God's calling...

St. John's UCC, Lewisburg

Trinity UCC, Lewistown

St. Luke's UCC, Lititz

Faith UCC, Littlestown



you? How do the waters of baptism call out to you today?

I know that as the star word tradition teaches I should be at least two words past my gold star "motivation," but that word - that star - doesn't seem to be finished with me yet.

I remember my own baptism each year when we celebrate Christ's baptism on the liturgical calendar and something about preaching this text in the church that sent me my gold star "motivation" has me looking in new directions for how the waters of baptism call me anew to live and be part of the family of God today.

How about you? Reflect on your own baptism this week and be motivated to live and love as beloved of God. Get your own star or water droplet word from Jen Fulwiler here.

May the Christ's light of this season shine brightly in your life and bring you peace.

Shalon,

Nora

Rev. Dr. Nora Foust

Associate Conference Minister

Penn Central Conference



Looking Ahead:

**"Renewing The Covenant We Share" PCC
61st Annual Meeting** - June 9-10, 2023 at Double-Tree Hotel in Willow Street (Lancaster)

"Making All Things New"

General Synod 2023

"Making All Things New" will be the theme of the 34th biennial General Synod of the United Church of Christ, scheduled for June 30–July 4, 2023, in Indianapolis.

The General Synod of the United Church of Christ will get back to business a year from now. And it will do so in person.

After an all-virtual experience in 2021, the UCC's biennial national meeting will require all voting delegates to be in Indianapolis in 2023. That's according to the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, the associate general minister who serves as Synod administrator.. Delegates and visitors will meet June 30 through July 4 at the Indianapolis Convention Center.

UCC national setting hosts a variety of webinars for clergy and lay people alike. See the upcoming events and register for them online at: <https://www.ucc.org/events/>