PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

February 07, 2024

Greetings friends and members of Penn Central Conference,

"that they may all be one" - John 17:21

In January, I had the honor of representing our Penn Central Conference in Germany during the Evangelical Protestant Synod. I want to first thank our conference for this opportunity to represent us; our German roots matter to me (both theological and cultural). This work gave me a greater understanding of our heritage as well as possible future work together. I had an incredible time, personally and professionally!

Ecumenism is one of my passions and I believe when we look at our UCC Scripture motto from John 17 that the DNA of ecumenism is written in the foundations of who we believe God is calling us to be as a denomination from the prayer that Jesus prayed himself for us – that we may be one. In an ever dividing world, working together as the Body of Christ is so important. I feel that vision reignited upon my return to the States.

My work in Germany included leading a workshop for the Synod on How to Engage Your Church Members. They also asked me to write a prayer on peace and lead that in their opening worship. I attended Synod meetings all day as an ecumenical observer of their work. The meetings were all in German, and I sadly do not speak German (at least not yet, however, I have a new hope to learn!) I had a translator with me all day and I cannot thank our partner, Reverend Frauke Lasser, enough for the immense amount of energy she offered in translating for me as well as a true friendship we share now. Additionally, the Synod asked if I would address their entire body as an observer about their work.

Continues on back

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, Red Lion

Richfield UCC, Richfield

Grace Evangelical & Reformed UCC, Richfield

St. Paul's UCC, Sacramento



I met people who graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary who serve their churches at home in Germany. I met pastors who served my church, Faith UCC in State College, during a Sabbatical converge. That was a treat for me to strengthen relationships with people who are dear to my congregation. I enjoyed numerous conversations with people who love the church, love our God, and are searching for new ways to ensure our outreach of the Gospel is lived into with our theological tradition guiding us.

I am so grateful for the new friends, and also grateful for a calling inside me to continue to nourish our German partnership. We have so much to offer each other in the work of Gospel ministry and this relationship with the German Synod is really important for us to continue to care for. As church culture continues to change I think working together will only become more important.

Here is the prayer on peace I wrote and prayed for the Synod. I pray it may nourish you and perhaps your congregation, too.

Lord, the Scripture says, "Blessed are the peacemakers," yet, we too often hold grudges and choose fear which turns us against each other. The way of blessing is in the making of peace. Guide our words to create a world of peace; guide our actions to make the peace that passes all understanding here on earth, as it is in your kingdom come. Nourish the peace in our souls so our lives will be witnesses to your peace, Amen.

Again, thank you PCC for this opportunity to serve on our behalf and continue to build the body of Christ so that we all may be one!

In Hope,

Jes

Reverend Jes Kast

Faith UCC, State College



Rev. Jes Kast (left) and Rev. Frauke Lasser

Registration is now open for **HC Spirit camp at Hartman Center Campground and Retreat Center** - Sunday, July 28th through Saturday, August 3rd, 2024.

https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/hartman-homecoming-week-2024

Camp makes a great Christmas gift. Check out the summer options from our partners at Lutheran Camping Corporation's Kirchenwald (and Nawakwa)

https://www.lutherancamping.org/summer-camp/youth-summer-programs/