PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

June 19, 2024

Greetings Penn Central members and friends,

"On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion, and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And waking up, he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Be silent! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" Mark 4:35-41 NRSV

How would you describe the current state of the world? I'm presuming that you're feeling that its status falls more on the chaotic side of the spectrum than the peaceful. You may have many reasons, like I do, to name chaos rather than peace, including personal ones that go beyond national and world events. Personally, I would love to have a burning bush, a pillar of smoke, or a livestream of Jesus sitting in a boat in a storm exclaiming to the world, "Peace! Be still!"

If I'm not going to get something that obvious from the Divine, I'd even take a visit from a departed loved one or ancestor. I'm thinking of Paul McCartney's mother, who died when he was 14 years old, who came to him in a dream in a chaotic point of his life and career. He said, "She was reassuring me, saying, 'It's going to be OK, just let it be.' I felt so great." He would go on to write the song "Let It Be" out of the positive nature and assurance that his mother, Mary, gave to him in that dream. I guess I'm envious of Sir Paul's experience, especially because I'm feeling like the chaos is winning.

I was once in a workshop that asked participants the question, "What are the scriptures that you carry with you?" It was meant to help us identify the founda-

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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...

Zion Stone Valley UCC, Dalmatia

Shiloh UCC, Danville

St. James UCC, Danville

Trinity UCC, Danville



tions of our personal faith, so that amidst the storms and chaos of life, we could draw on these passages of wisdom and comfort. The point was to shift from counting on Jesus to appear and calm everything to connecting to the divine wisdom of the written Word, passed on from our ancestors' faith.

"Be still and know that I am God," from Psalm 46 is a passage I carry in musical chant form in my heart that ties into this week's gospel passage. "Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God," the prophet Micah proclaims to us mortals what is required of us. In Roman's 5:1-5, the Apostle Paul writes about the process of living through suffering which builds endurance and character, ending in a "hope that does not disappoint us." This has been a passage important to me living with a chronic illness.

This year July 14th will be twenty years since a tornado formed and ripped through Campbelltown, PA. Some of the members of the congregation I served there were home at 3 p.m. that afternoon when the tornado warning was declared. Some sat in their bathtubs reciting scripture and the Lord's Prayer for comfort until the storm passed.

While not all scripture is meant to bring comfort, there are life-passages that we can carry with us like a yoke of hope and comfort amidst the chaos of these days, like oars helping us navigate the torrents of the storm, and like an ancestor assuring us that peace and stillness are possible. May we all have the gift of such "life-preservers" in these days.

Dwight

Rev. Dwight Hein

Facilitator of Care to Clergy and Clergy Families

Penn Central Conference

I bring greetings to each of you in Penn Central Conference from your Board of Directors.

We gathered for our 62nd Annual Meeting, a meeting like no other gathering in our past 62 years! As we came together Saturday morning to do the business of the conference, one could feel the undercurrents of excitement, expectation, wonderment and uncertainty. To think we had 145 in-person delegates and 33 on-line delegates, not to forget our visitors, for the meeting was exciting and encouraging at the same time. A number I have not heard yet is how many of our 150+ congregations were represented at this meeting. [Editors note: approx 105 churches and 5 other ministry settings were represented] That number will tell another story which will also play a role in the Keystone vote to be held November 9th.

This year our agenda items were few with only one action item. Our treasurer, Rev. Mike Price, gave a short report with some interesting statistics. He shared 53 churches participated in all 5 giving opportunities (Five for Five) which are: One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, The Christmas Fund and finally Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM).

He shared the Finance Committee was happy to report the following grant recipient information: Approximately $9000 was given for A/V needs, clothing banks and more as Innovation Grants, $5000 was given for the Lebanon clothing bank from the St John's, Lebanon grant, and finally the Outdoor Ministry Commission disbursed in 2023 and thus far in 2024 approximately $82,000 to churches/groups and camperships. Remember when OCWM giving goes down it affects the work of our conference as it funds the ministries of our conference and our staff.

Our action item consisted of approving the Nominations Commission's slate of new board members and delegates for General Synod 2025. I cannot thank these folks enough (and you know who you are!) for the work they will do to serve our board and our conference, either as a returning member or a new member. Kudos to all of you for stepping up and saying "Yes I will serve!" With the addition of the new members, we gave a hearty thank you to Phil Landers and Dave Downer who have both completed their terms. Both have previously served many more years and have served in many capacities. Thank you again Phil and Dave!

Blessings to all!

Carolyn Herman

Board Moderator

Penn Central Conference Board of Directors

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

Check out the summer options from our partners at Lutheran Camping Corporation's Kirchenwald (and Nawakwa)