

Shiloh United Church of Christ
Danville, PA (rural – small town)
Founded in 1856
Average worship attendance - 80

Our Penn Central Conference adopted a new mission statement last spring that says this: ***Penn Central Conference – where congregations passionately declare and demonstrate the courageous love of Christ.*** I want to let you know that at Shiloh UCC in Danville, PA, we are doing our best to live out those words.

We voted in September 2015 to become an official Open and Affirming Church, and since then we have continued to make expanding our welcome a core mission for our congregation. We've been building on that vision in some new and interesting ways.

Banners in the front of our sanctuary boldly proclaim our welcoming statement and commitment to welcome all God's children. People who are visiting for weddings and funerals have expressed how much those words mean to them, because they or someone in their family isn't fully welcome other places. As we continue to speak words of inclusion and hope, it's become much easier for our members to talk about their faith and invite others to join us for worship, ministry, and other events.



We've continued to provide educational opportunities around LGBTQ issues through book studies and forums, inviting others in the wider community to join us. We've met a number of interesting and faith-filled people outside our congregation in the process, and it's wonderful to see that as we demonstrate Jesus' radical love for our neighbors, others are becoming interested in doing the same. That's led to us providing a worship service at the Mid-Atlantic LGBTQ Conference in Bloomsburg next month.



We are in the process of becoming Accessible 2 All (A2A), with special emphasis on providing access and inclusion to people with physical, mental, and emotional challenges. We purchased a new bus and made space in our sanctuary for those in wheelchairs, which is allowing several of our members to attend worship and fellowship activities who otherwise would be left at home.

We've also made a bold commitment to get to know our Muslim neighbors. We started with a "get to know our neighbors" dinner, where we got to meet one another and learn about each other's faiths. When the Muslim Community Center was evicted from the space they'd been renting in town, we offered space in our building so they could have a place for worship and prayer. It's been a true blessing for us and our neighbors to support and share God's love with each other, and we are looking forward to where this partnership will grow next.



We, at Shiloh UCC in Danville, are proud to be one of the congregations in the Penn Central Conference who are passionately declaring and demonstrating the courageous love of Christ!

---Rev. Mary Schmozter