The Keystone Connection

A Message to the Conference

April 28, 2026

Members and Friends of Keystone Conference,

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. 1 Peter 2:2-3

This is such an interesting line from one of the Lectionary texts assigned to us this week. This feminine metaphor of God feeding us milk as our mothers once did, so that we might grow into salvation, into wholeness, is striking and beautiful. And yet children don't need to be told to long for their mother's or other milk – it's instinctual because it's needed for survival. But the author seems to know that later in life, we will need to be told to yearn for the purity of God's goodness, as we so often confuse good and bad milk, good and bad things. It becomes a choice later, a daily choice to seek the best kinds of spiritual food, to choose from a menu that the world offers us that offers so many options, most of which are not good for the work of growing into salvation.

But the latter part of the sentence is important as well: if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. The hopeful response by us is that we have indeed tasted that the Lord is good, so that we know what good or bad milk tastes like. Last Sunday, in a sermon I preached, I talked about how to discern the voice of the Good Shepherd against the other voices floating in our heads and in the world. The only way to do so is by listening to what that voice is telling us to do, whether to love or hate, to heal or hurt, and practice mercy or judgment. It's also the recipe for knowing the difference between fresh milk and sour milk. In our best moments, surely, we tasted that the Lord is good, so good, and the work still before us to continue to seek that good milk, day by day, so that we may grow into wholeness.

Rev. Kevin J. McLemore

Transitional Regional Conference Minister for Region 1

Keystone Conference UCC

Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ's first Annual Meeting will be held June 5-7 at Millersville University in Millersville. Overnight accommodations will be on campus as well as the DoubleTree Hilton in Lancaster. Registration is now open! Register here: **https://keystoneconference.regfox.com/2026-spring-meeting** (or go to keystoneucc.org and click on the Annual Meeting tab under News & Events.)

Our theme is "Joy at the Table Together" and our centering scripture is Acts 2:46-47 "Every day they met together, breaking bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God." The meeting will include a Service of Consecration for Keystone Conference.

Speakers will include Rev. Dr. Marcia McFee, author of Think Like a Filmmaker: Sensory-Rich Worship for Unforgettable Messages; Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ; Rev. Dr. Mary Luti, author of Do This: Communion for Just and Courageous Living; Rev. Greg Edwards, Executive Director of POWER Interfaith, Secretary Russell Redding, PA Secretary of Agriculture, and Rev. Freeman Palmer, Conference Minister for the Central Atlantic Conference.

50 Days of Easter Food Challenge

A People of the Table Mission Project for Keystone Conference's 1st Annual Meeting

The Challenge: Churches across the Conference are challenged to donate non-perishable food to a local food bank between Easter (04/05/2026) and Pentecost (05/24/2026) and to report the quantities of their donations.

Each church will report its totals (by category) via a web link, and the Conference-wide total will be revealed at the 1st Annual Meeting, June 5–7, 2026. Using categories such as canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, pasta and rice, toiletries, and more will provide an easy-to-visualize picture of the breadth of donations.

Learn more at **keystoneucc.org/people-of-the-table/**

Attention Youth Campers and Families,

Please read the following information carefully, as the Conference policy for supplementing youth summer camping has changed.

For the 2026 summer season, the Keystone Conference will campership or reimburse 30% of the cost for one youth to attend one summer camping experience. If a youth attends more than one camp during the summer, only one camp will be eligible for the 30% reimbursement. Please use the application for additional camps if this creates a hardship.

Learn more and download the application under the campership section of keystoneucc.org/mission-grants-committee/

Living Waters Camp & Conference Center
Schellsburg, PA

Trustin' Jesus! Summer Camps
Fishing Camp - June 28 to July 2, for grades 6 to 12
Primary (grades K - 3) - July 5 to 11
Elementary Camp (grades 4 - 6) - July 5 to 11
Junior-Senior High Camp - July 12 - 18
Grandparent / Grandchild Camp is July 12 to 15
Learn more at livingwaterscamp.org

HC Spirit Camp is hosted at Hartman Center Campground, Milroy, PA . The theme for HC Spirit 2026 is "In the Wilderness." Camp runs from July 26 - August 1, 2026. Registration is now open—check hcspiritcamp.org for more info and registration.