PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

June 21, 2023

Greetings members and friends of Penn Central Conference,

Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 NRSV)

The epistle message falls on the summer solstice this year! This does not happen very often, so I feel thankful. The solstice is an important day for me, not only because it is the day before my birthday. :) Summer solstice is a recognition of the longest day of the year, when the light stretches out into the evening, and there is a moment when it seems the earth stops and stands in perfect balance. Solstice celebrations are held all over the northern hemisphere and contain various festivities, almost always including bonfires. There may be dancing and flowers. The sun is praised, and many give thanks for the gift of light.

Just as Jesus' birth was tied together with the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere, there is a Christian connection with the summer solstice. The day is celebrated as St. John's Day, marking the birth of John the Baptist. Early disciples knew that pairing the two events would strengthen their own witness among their people by not eradicating the event, but instead embracing it and providing a Christian patina, so to speak. St. John's Day is still celebrated in many countries.

Tying John the Baptist with the summer solstice made good Christian marketing sense. Nowadays I like to think there are additional reasons to draw attention to the summer solstice for believers. That momentary balance between light and dark is a potent reminder that we exist on a small blue marble in the universe, dependent upon our sun for life – even

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Contact us!

PCC Office Staff

Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, PhD - *Conference Minister*
email: ccall@pccucc.org / Phone: 717-433-3196

Rev. Dr. Nora Driver Foust - *Associate Conference Minister*
email: nfoust@pccucc.org / Phone: 717-433-2587

Rev. Rick Luciotti - *Facilitator of Care to Clergy and Clergy Families*
email: rluciotti@gmail.com / Phone: 717-433-6306

C. Paul Keller - *Office Manager*
email: pkeller@pccucc.org / Phone: 717-652-1560

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...

Emmanuel UCC, York

Faith UCC, York

Hayshire UCC, York

Heidelberg UCC, York



though it is 93 million miles away. Too much astronomy can make your mind ache with wonder, but in this case our fragility in the universe is balanced by our assurance of our Creator's hand holding us. Not only do we depend upon the sun, but we also depend on the slow oscillation of the blue marble that tilts us toward and away from the sun depending on the season. This is the foundation for our agriculture, the migrations of God's species, the elemental shift of seasons, the birth cycles of creatures, the trees in golden turning. All of it should result in wonder. And gratitude.

There is a progression in the life of the universe and there will come a day when the summer solstice ends. However, God's providence still holds. We trust that what be will be, and, with Juian of Norwich, "all manner of things shall be well." Finitude always haunts us. But this solstice day, give thanks for the light that sustains us (both the sun and the son) and give praise to our Creator, who "saw the light was good, and… separated the light from the darkness… and called the light day, and the darkness… night." Every solstice we can remember, "there was evening and there was morning, the first day."

Peace,

Carrie

Rev. Dr. Carrie Call

Conference Minister

Penn Central Conference

"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.

Hartman Center Homecoming week

July 31 through August 5, 2023

We will be returning to Hartman Center Campgroun d in Milroy, PA as guests. Camping experiences for all ages, including intergenerational camps.

For more information, contact
Rev. Alice Rauch alirauch07@gmail.com (director) or Rev. Amelia Price aashivers@gmail.com (registrar)

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

2 night camps Monday, July 31 at 4PM through Wedn esday, August 2 at 4PM

Getting Started - Grades 1 and 2 ($125)

Intergenerational Camp ($125)

3 night camps Wednesday, August 2 at 4PM through Saturday, August 5 at 11AM

Intergenerational Camp ($190)

Camp of the Heart ($250)

5 night camps Monday, 07/31/2023 at 4PM through S aturday, 08/05/2023 at 11AM

Elementary - Grades 3 - 5 ($300)

Junior High - Grades 6 - 8 ($300)

Senior High - Grades 9 - 12 plus ($300)

Leadership - Grades 9 - 12 plus ($300)

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