



# PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

## A Message from PCC

**April 8, 2020**

**Dear Friends of Penn Central Conference -**

*O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.*

*Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.*

**Isaac Watts 1719**

These words of the great hymn we know so well sustains and encourages me in these new times we are all living into. Based on words from the psalmist, they ring as true for me today, as they have for those faithful ones over the past three centuries. They offer me the hope I need to be focused in these trying days and remind me of God's presence past, present and future. It is in the context of this hope that I report on the regular Penn Central Conference Board of Directors meeting we held last Saturday by Zoom.

There were several decisions that you need to know up front.

1. The Annual Meeting of Penn Central Conference has been moved to Saturday, August 29, 2020. Please put this date on your calendars! It will be a one day meeting with the location to be determined - hopefully at a church in Harrisburg. Since there will be important business to conduct, it is imperative that we attain our quorum of 225 delegates (2 from our congregations plus all clergy). I suspect this may be a busy time, but we will need as many there as possible. More information will be coming as we adjust to this re-schedule. We will be working with Susquehanna University to hold our 2021 Annual meeting there next year.

2. All Penn Central Conference related activities scheduled for Hartman Center have been canceled until September 1. That means there will be no camping season this year. I know it's a great disappointment for us all this summer, but under the present circumstances, it seemed to be the best decision we could make. Zoe D'heedene, Coordinator of Camps/Conferences will continue her work, meeting regularly with camp folk, SSTs, directors and others that have committed for the summer

*Continues on back*

## Outdoor Ministries

Dear Hartman Center family,

It is with a heavy heart that, due to the risks of Covid-19, we are postponing the following events until the public health emergency has passed:

Countdown to Opening Day Fishing Retreat, Mar. 16-18

Confirmation Retreat, Mar. 27-29

What is Good Leadership Retreat, April 14-15

Learning To See Photography Retreat, April 27-29

PRIDE: LGBTQ+ Retreat, May 29-31

The Golf Outing on May 9th has been cancelled as well.

Summer Camp is also not going forward in 2020. Be watching for ways to connect online with our Outdoor Ministries!

**Your sister in Christ,**

**Zoë A. D'heedene**

**Coordinator of Camps and Retreats**

## 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.*

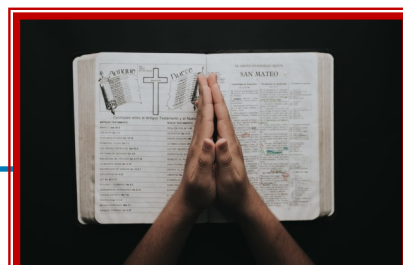
This week, we pray for each other as we continue to live into God's calling...

**Saint Thomas UCC, Harrisburg**

**Penbrook UCC, Harrisburg**

**Salem UCC, Harrisburg**

**Trinity UCC, Hellam**



## Message from the Conference cont'

season. Given her considerable gifts and creativity, we will wait to see what may happen instead of camp at Hartman Center. All this of course, dependent on how things go in the days to come. All monies received thus far for camps this summer will be returned, unless they are donated to Hartman Center. At this time, no further decisions are being made in regard to Hartman Center. The work on Michaux Lodge is set to be completed when it can be scheduled. The sewer line problem has been found and repaired - it turned out to be a fairly easy solution and not very expensive.

3. The Finance Committee presented a proposed budget for 2021, but the Board decided to wait until our June meeting before finalizing it for presentation at the Annual Meeting.

The Board, upon the suggestion and hard work of our treasurer, Ron Royer, voted to support Ron to apply for an SBA loan from our bank as part of the recent CARES act passed by Congress. This would amount to around \$60,000. He has been authorized to do this on behalf of the conference. Should all this be approved (and no one, including the government knows what's happening just yet), the loan amount will go toward supporting the salaries of our conference staff. He will also be applying for a \$10,000 EIDL grant on behalf of the Conference. Currently, the Conference is doing okay financially. OCWM giving is on a par with this same time last year and we are grateful for this. Thank you to all our churches that continue to give their OCWM support to the conference and the wider church. However, we recognize that under the current circumstances, nothing is guaranteed for the future. This is where our living in hope and faithfulness comes in! I would urge us all to do what we can to maintain our giving, with the knowledge that the present circumstances will perhaps change what our churches are able to do. We are confident we can find our way through all this and look forward to the future when we are able to once again move and work freely.

4. Upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, the Board unanimously voted to present the Rev. Dr. Carolyn Call as our candidate for election by Penn Central Conference as our settled Conference Minister at the Annual Meeting in August. This will be for a 6 year term, as stated in our by-laws. The Personnel Committee did a thorough assessment of her work with us thus far, as our Transitional Conference Minister and all the reviews were excellent. We are indeed blessed with the leadership that she has provided for the conference and our churches. There will be more information about this as we near the

Annual Meeting time. For those who might have forgotten, we did do a thorough search last year, interviewing several candidates, before selecting Dr. Call as our choice for the Transitional CM position. Our contract with her provided that she would be eligible for the settled Conference Minister position after an evaluation of the goals we set for her during this transitional year. We also agreed to extend her current contract with us until the Annual Meeting. Board members and elected officers of the conference will also continue until that time.

We look forward with eager anticipation to the arrival of Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola who will begin her position with us on June 1. Her phenomenal gifts will be greatly needed by our churches as she works with us all to sort out how we may remain faithful and strengthen our ministries in Christ's name. We are acting in trust and hope that we will be able to maintain our Conference staff and walk with confidence through these difficult days in anticipation of a new day coming soon.

As Moderator of the Board of Directors, I welcome your comments and concerns and encourage you to contact me at any time.

*O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.*

*Still be our God while troubles last, and our eternal home!*

**Rev. Ann M. Graves**

**Moderator, PCC Board of Directors**

## Contact us!

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