

From the Penn Central Conference



"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully."

-Romans 12:6-8

Each one of us in the Body of Christ is gifted. A big part of my understanding of my call in the church is helping others to fully live into their gifts. (Click on my [bio](#) if you want to learn more about my call and background.) Think on your gifts today. Ask yourself how fully engaging those gifts in the ministry of your church would be living our common prayer that "God's kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven."

If you are interested in exploring your gifts or even discovering more about yourself and your call to the ministry and mission of your local church, set up a meeting today with your local pastor. Through that conversation, you can get connected to local church ministries, association ministry opportunities and even wider church ministry with the conference or national church. I am also working on building an on-line learning experience to engage in spiritual growth and development toward living our faith out loud and outside the walls of our church buildings. I welcome your input on this planning for a wider church conversation through the completion of this [on-line survey](#).

At the core of conference ministry for me is encouraging the Church to strive for healthy ministry in all her settings, large and small, traditional and newly birthed, and I am really excited that the Penn Central Conference is hosting the [Rev. Dr. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi on Saturday, October 28th](#) at Mt. Zion in York. She will be talking with us about vitality, especially small church vitality. She will look at links between vitality, spirituality and mission. **Rev. Dr. Lizardy-Hajbi will also lead a workshop on the "Be the Church" slogans and how to live them out through the passion inspired mission of your church.** What would it look like for your church to "forgive often" or to "share earthly and spiritual resources?" Register for our keynote and workshop on October 28 to learn more!

Another opportunity for working toward healthy ministry is our **Lay Boundary Awareness program**. I am part of the team that will lead this event twice in 2018: March 3 and October 20. Following our first Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Churches event in 2017, feedback insisted that this training for lay leaders and pastors be repeated often. By inviting clear communication and sharing of leadership gifts and expectations,

churches can move toward more healthy environments for ministry. This is a complimentary program to the boundary training for pastors that has been in place for several years.

Speaking of being in place for several years, **Boundary Awareness Training for Clergy has a new curriculum**. One thing was made clear to me upon arrival in Penn Central and that was to really spice up and change the face of boundary training for clergy. Establishing Boundary Basics is still required for those just entering ministry, but for the advanced credit hours needed, I have developed 2-hour topical credits that are offered regularly throughout the calendar year. This invites clergy to attend one session each year to stay on the 6-credits every three year cycle. Remaining events in this calendar year include the brand-new [Healthy Practices in the Third-Third](#) for retired clergy on October 18 and November 16 and one more [Advanced Session on November 11](#). Register today for any of these events!

As part of my practice of ministry, I have been involved in a **Clergy Community of Practice** with other ACMs across the denomination since 2012. I cannot say enough about how this collegial group has informed my work and ministry or how they have sustained me in times of crisis or despair. All clergy are encouraged to be part of small groups that offer peer support like this. Statistics prove that these small groups reduce turnover and lead to healthy habits of ministry over a career. We have existing ministeriums that may meet this need. We are also beginning Clergy Communities of Practice. These groups provide intentional, covenantal space for the sharing of how clergy engage their ministerial gifts in the everyday practice of pastoral leadership. Through worship together, personal check-in time and discussion of a case-study, clergy are invited to offer care, support and accountability to one another while nurturing practices of spiritual discipline and further development of their vocation and craft in a covenantal setting. Those interested in more information on your local ministerium meeting or these forming Communities of Practice, contact me.

It is a blessing to me to serve along so many gifted leaders, clergy and lay, in the Penn Central Conference. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there are ways that I can assist in your pursuit of answering God's call for your service in the Church.

Shalom and Blessings,

Nora