PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

March 13, 2024

Greetings friends and members of Penn Central!

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." John 3:14-16 (NRSV)

First, I want to thank you all for the emails and notes welcoming me into the position of Facilitator of Clergy Care when it was announced last month. I am looking forward to serving in this position, fully coming on board to this new shared ministry position on May 1. While I've begun checking my new PCC email address occasionally and laying some groundwork for my ministry in that position, until then, please be sure to contact Carrie or Nora for any clergy care needs.

Second, let me tell you all a little more about myself for those of you who don't know me. I'm in my 30th year of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ. The first parish I served was in Sandusky, Ohio, just a few blocks from a lovely bay off Lake Erie. The last 22 years, I've been serving with the wonderful people of Salem UCC in Campbelltown, PA, in the southwest corner of the Lebanon Association. I'm in the midst of the transition time of ending my ministry with Salem, and will be moving into the shared ministry position I mentioned above with PCC and as pastor of Quentin UCC. I was the Vice Moderator and then Moderator of the Conference Board of Directors totaling almost four years, but had to resign this position when I was hired by the board as a new staff person. I try to keep balance in my life by playing piano and guitar, reading, and spending time with family and friends, sometimes at a golf course with them. I've been married to my wonderfully supportive spouse, Kelly, for over 30 years and we have an only child who is close to graduating from Drexel University and embarking on a new segment of his life, too. This is indeed a significant year of transition and change for my family.

Continues on back

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

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...

St. Paul's UCC, Shrewsbury

St. Matthew (Coleman's) UCC, Spring Glen

Bethel UCC, Spring Grove

Mount Zion UCC, Spring Grove



Discerning whether to enter a time of transition can be very difficult. It means making a decision about leaving behind what we know well: the routines and rhythms of life, the varied landscapes of relationships, and the shared experiences of joy, sorrow and healing. I guess that's why right now in some small way because of the anxiety associated with change I understand the Hebrew people who were constantly badgering Moses and Yahweh with their shouts of, "Why did you make us leave what we knew?!" Leaving behind what and who we know so well is rarely easy or simple.

While I know God can handle my and anyone else's complaining, there are stories that God used to get a little perturbed about such things, i.e. poisonous snakes, like in our Numbers 24:4-9 lectionary passage from this past Sunday. But through it all, the wandering people were never abandoned by God. Yes, I, too, wonder why God didn't just get rid of the snakes, instead of the people having to get bitten first and then look at the snake image on the pole to be healed? But again, God didn't leave them. In John 3:15, in the verse preceding arguably the most well-known verse in that gospel, Jesus asks everyone to look to him being raised up as a way to assure all that God is present now and beyond now.

In times of transitions, both those discerned by us and those hoisted upon us by life, when our footing seems unsure and slithering under us at the first misstep, we are asked to do what people of faith have been asked to do for millennia, look upon God, look upon Jesus, look upon the Spirit. Look beyond ourselves. We are asked to focus the eyes of our heart on the divine beyond time and rest assured of God's presence in our wildernesses of ever-changing life.

In Peace,

Dwight

Rev. Dwight Hein

Incoming Facilitator of Clergy Care

Penn Central Conference

62nd Annual Meeting of the Penn Central Conference

For the first time, all four Pennsylvania conferences of the UCC will be gathering for a shared Annual Meeting on June 7-9, 2024 at The Penn Stater in State College, PA. We will have shared worship, workshops, meals and meetings as well as each conference's separate business meeting.

We will be joined by General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, who will be preaching during closing worship on Sunday. All four conferences will be hosting a reception with her on Saturday evening as well. Register by clicking the Annual Meeting tab on pccucc.org

Registration is now open for **HC Spirit camp at Hartman Center Campground and Retreat Center** - Sunday, July 28th through Saturday, August 3rd, 2024.

https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/hartman-homecoming-week-2024

Camp makes a great Christmas gift. Check out the summer options from our partners at Lutheran Camping Corporation's Kirchenwald (and Nawakwa)

https://www.lutherancamping.org/summer-camp/youth-summer-programs/

