# The Keystone Connection

## A Message to the Conference

**May 19, 2026**

**Members and Friends of Keystone Conference,**

*"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them."* – Acts 2:1-3

In the summer of 1991, a pastor and church north of the city of Pittsburgh gave me an opportunity to preach my first series of sermons. They were gracious teachers, showing patience with me as I navigated the text I'd meticulously typed and printed from my Brother word processor. For this reason and for many others, Trinity United Church of Christ in Dorseyville will always hold a dear and special place in my heart.

So, my heart sank when I heard the news of the fire that had devastated the church's sanctuary. I am deeply grateful for the leadership of the Rev. Dave Mears and for the people of Trinity who are showing great resilience in the face of this trial. I know that the church will have challenges ahead of it, but I am confident that the Spirit will continue to move among the congregation of Trinity as it has so faithfully in the past.

Reading the Pentecost text with this in mind unsettles me, as the image of "tongues, as of fire" accentuates the destructive blaze of flames. But for those early disciples, the ecstatic gift of tongues and the image of the fire that they bore witness to reveal a power that is more creative than destructive. Not wanting to minimize the tragic damage that flames can do, it seems to me that the text is also a reminder of the power of God to bring something new out of something that at first glance seems only to be destructive.

As the Easter season closes, the message that God brings life out of death, joy out of sorrow, hope out of despair, and good out of evil, remains true for us as Christians not only at Easter but in every season. The Keystone Conference itself is a witness to the truth of the Resurrection and the power of the Spirit. May God's life-giving work be revealed in your life, at Pentecost and always.

**David**

**Rev. David Ackerman**

**Regional Conference Minister, Region 3**

**Keystone Conference UCC**

## 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.