



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

A Message from PCC

February 19, 2020

Dear Friends of Penn Central Conference -

"In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Romans 12:5

How many of you have had the great misfortune of knowing exactly what you should have said mere moments after something else had passed your lips? That was me this past weekend.

On Saturday I had the great pleasure of spending a few hours with pastors in the Central Association to talk about covenant. (In April, that conversation will continue at their Annual Meeting and include lay delegates and visitors as we look deeply at what it means to truly belong to one another.) On Sunday, I was preaching on the lectionary passage in Matthew – four laws framed by Christ as centered on human relationships – when something I should have said Saturday, hit me.

"You have heard it said, 'You shall not murder,'" Jesus was teaching. "But I tell you anyone who is angry with a brother or sister..." (Matt 5:21-22) What if Jesus was really teaching about living in relationship with one another, belonging to one another? If that were the case, the well-being of another is important; your mere feelings toward another are as important as your actions toward them.

That is what I should have said on Saturday when talking about how covenant asks much of and yet, transforms all parties. Covenant calls us into an active yielding of wills that binds us in a common life. That is what truly belonging to one another might look – and feel – like.

When I was a child, my church sang John Fawcett's hymn "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" with great regularity. Back then I had no idea what this 'tie' was, I figured it had something to do with our church. As I have grown up in life and faith, I have come to understand covenant

Continues on back

Outdoor Ministries

Upcoming Retreats:

Countdown To Opening Day (Fishing, of course!) with Dave Bushnell & Friends - March 16 - 18

Confirmation Retreat - March 27 - 29

What is Good Leadership? with Rev. Dr. Carrie Call - April 14 - 15

Learning to See - A Photography Retreat with Nelson Dodson - April 27 - 29

Pride Retreat for LGBTQ Folks & Allies - May 29-31
(details to come)

SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION IS OPEN! Early bird pricing for those who pay in full before March 31, 2020. Learn more and register at <https://hartmancenter.com/summer-camp/>

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...

Trinity (Strawberry Ridge) UCC, Danville

St. John's UCC, Denver

Dover UCC, Dover

Salem UCC, Dover



Message from the Conference cont'

as the tie that binds "our hearts in Christian love," our lives, too. And just as there is no one tie that binds, there is no one understanding of or way to live in covenant with one another.

Walter Brueggemann writes. "Covenant insists that we are members one of another, pledged to solidarity across ideological lines and prepared to live in sustained engagement with each other in ways that impinge on and eventually transform all parties to the transaction...all members stand in accountability to a will and purpose beyond our own will and purpose...covenant yields a way of life that is always on the move, always summoned beyond our preferred way stations, always sustained when we move out beyond our comfort zone in faithful obedience." (*Introduction to Jane Fissler Hoffman's "Covenant"*)

How is covenant lived out in your church community? What does the common life of your association look like? How does this unity in the Body of Christ hold us together over many possible differences? In what ways might thinking about your feelings being as important as your actions transform your relationships with others and with the Church?

Shalom,

Nora

Upcoming Events

Chicken and Waffle Dinner, to benefit the Hartman Center Sponsored by the Brush Valley Fusion of Faith, UCC and ELCA at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 120 East Main St., Rebersburg, PA

Saturday, February 29 from 4 to 7 PM. Eat in and Take Out available. Adults \$10, Children 5-10 \$8 and under 5 Free

Stephen Ministry Introductory Workshop - Palm Lutheran Church, Palmyra - March 14, 9:00AM - 1:00PM

Mended Heart Lenten Concert/Potluck - Salem UCC, Elizabethtown - March 15 - 3:00pm

The Perfect Blend: Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations—A day with author Bishop Robert Schnase—Saturday, September 19, 2020—Lancaster Theological Seminary, Santee Chapel—Seating is limited, registration required. Register at pccucc.org/register-for-an-event

PLANNING AHEAD:

York Association Earth Day Anniversary Weekend w/ Jim Antal - Mt. Zion UCC, York - April 18, 9:00AM

Annual Meeting - June 12-13, 2020

Around the conference:

DVD Lending Library - St. John's UCC, Chambersburg, manager@sjucc1811.org or phone (717) 263-8593.

Free Choir Robes - Emmanuel UCC, Hanover

Emmanuel UCC has 36 choir robes (made in the US by E.R. Moore.) They are green, in a traditional style, gathered yoke, front zip with stoles. Call Emmanuel UCC at 717-632-8281 for details.

Looking for Bells - Church of the Apostles, Waynesboro
Narda Druckenmiller is looking for a 2 Octave set of Handbells that another church may not be using or willing to sell. Contact Narda at 717-994-4614

Looking to borrow - A congregational set of "Unbinding Your Heart" by Martha Grace Reese. If your church has a set to lend, contact Hamilton Park UCC, Lancaster (717) 397-9791

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Contact us!

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