PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

November 22, 2023

Members and Friends of Penn Central Conference,

"Come ye thankful people, come; raise the song of harvest home. All is safely gathered in ere the winter storm begin. God, our maker, doth provide for our wants to be supplied; come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home."

The words of this hymn were written by Henry Alford, British theologian and churchman of the 19th century. The hymn is largely based on Psalms 89 and 86. Clearly it is a celebration of the harvest and of God's bountiful gift of creation. The blessings of God's nature and mercy are interwoven serving to remind us that God is in and through everything we have and all that we do.

Though we most often sing this hymn on or around Thanksgiving Day, a continual spirit of thanksgiving dwelling within our spirits is clearly expressed in the first few notes. We are to always be conscious of God's invitation to a partnership with the Almighty in the care and enjoyment of creation. And though our lives are but transitory, our proper thanksgiving is to actively strive to leave our corner of God's creation better than we found it.

How simple it all seems and how easily we sing those words. But, how much of our daily devotions do we dedicate to a fuller meditation upon what it means to give thanks? It can be a perfunctory act at best to offer a table grace and then move on to more pressing matters. It is all too easy to say thank you without giving much thought, consideration or real appreciation for what we are receiving.

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

Rev. Rick Luciotti - *Facilitator of Care to Clergy and Clergy Families*
email: rluciotti@gmail.com / Phone: 717-433-6306

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...

Hill UCC, Lebanon

St. Mark's UCC, Lebanon

St. Paul's UCC, Lemaster

Dreisbach UCC, Lewisburg



The hymn, the stated Psalms, provide the basis for more deeply comprehending the breadth of God's love and care. As we prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday tomorrow perhaps devoting time and spirit in considering our gifts and blessings from God. In turn. May our living reflect that same thanksgiving in acts of loving justice, compassion and sharing the peace of Christ with everyone around us.

Rick

Rev. Rick Luciotti

Coordinator of Clergy Care

Penn Central Conference

Check out these events at Wittel Farm!

There's something special about Wittel Farm in Elizabethtown that draws me there year round. In the spring, summer, and fall it's The Growing Project managed by my friend Pastor Matt Lenahan. The farm is part of the Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central PA and this year The Growing Project harvested 27,000 lbs of fresh vegetables and fruit for Lancaster County food pantries and food banks.

Truth be told, Pastor Matt's energy and charisma is a large part of what brings me back to the farm. I particularly look forward to two December events that he leads at the farm. On Saturday, December 9th there is an Advent Day Apart (9 am – 2 pm) including lunch. The cost is $15. Register on https://www.lutherancamping.org/upcoming-events/

The Advent/Christmas in the Barn is planned for Sunday, December 17th (7-8:30 pm). We will begin around an outside fire circle then end with cookies and cocoa in the barn. There is no cost but registration is appreciated.

Anne and I will be attending both events and we'd love to see some of our UCC friends there as well.

Wittel Farm is located at 1753 Mill Road, Elizabethtown.

Dave Bushnell

Camp Director Pastor Alice shares, "please mark your calendar for next year's **HC Spirit camp at Hartman Center Campground and Retreat Center** - Sunday, July 28th through Saturday, August 3rd, 2024. In addition to the cabins and lodges, the new owners are working on RV sites that should be ready before next summer. We would love it if lots of Penn Central Conference folks are able to reserve and use those sites while we are there."

Wondering how your congregation might engage in outdoor ministry? Camps and retreats aren't the only recipients of grant funds. Kayak church, fire pit fellowships, community gardens, and solar projects are just a few of the ideas discussed for funding. The application window is currently open with applications available at https://pccucc.org/outdoor-ministry/

God's Dance Party

Hartman Center Winter Retreat

January 12th-14th

Early Bird Price: $75 (before December4, 2023)

Attention youth and youth leaders (if you're not a youth leader, please pass this on to whoever works with the youth or communicates with the youth in your church):

Are you in 6th to 12th grade? Looking for a break after the Christmas season? Want to get away from your family for a couple days? Missing Hartman Center?

We can help! Come party with us at our winter youth retreat from January 12 to 14. We'll be at Hartman Center in Hartman lodge (formerly Micheaux lodge) and maybe some cabins. You can't beat the price. Register by Dec 4 using code PCC2024 and pay half of the Early Bird price - only $37.50 for the weekend including all meals and lodging and fun!

Register now and tell your friends to register too.

https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/hc-winter-youth-retreat-2024