PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

February 28, 2024

Greetings friends and members of Penn Central Conference,

Growing up in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ, where most of our churches were predominantly African American, and our meetings and community worship services were well-integrated, I think I may have internally assumed a formal history of togetherness between the races. But as I grew older and learned more, I've discovered how wrong that assumption was.

Just as Black history is an integral thread throughout the whole of our country's historical tapestry, so the history of the Black Church is inextricably part of our own denominational histories. But many of us have been unaware of this rich heritage in the UCC, and only recently have we begun to bring it to our communal consciousness.

At General Synod this past summer, former General Minister and President Rev. John Dorhauer publicly apologized on behalf of our whole body for the historical inaccuracy of having named only four founding traditions in all our historical literature: Reformed, Evangelical, Christian, and Congregational. For the past 66 years we have left out the Afro-Christian Convention that was a large part of the Christian and Congregational heritage at their merger in 1931 and at our UCC merger in 1957. Fortunately, we have begun to address this sin of omission with the publication of the new book Afro-Christian Convention: The Fifth Stream of the United Church of Christ which was released and celebrated at General Synod.

As part of that celebration, our Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call who served on the UCC Historical Council, offered an introduction to the Afro-Christian Connection. That short speech and a video from Rev. Dr. Yvonne Delk, the first African American to be ordained by the UCC is available at the one-hour mark of this Plenary 5 video. It is well worth watching as we near the end of

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



Black History month, but hopefully not the end of learning and celebrating more Black history.

You might also want to order the book, The Afro-Christian Convention, that includes an 8-week discussion guide, and host a discussion group at your church. Some of you may recall that I invited one of the contributors, Dr. Julia Speller, to a Penn Central zoom presentation in November. At that time several churches shared that they found the discussion guide to be especially helpful in their exploration of this part of our history. The book is available from Pilgrim Press.

Other resources worth exploring include an episode of "Thursdays for the Soul" about the inclusion of Afro-Christian Convention in our historic tableau. That video can be seen on the UCC YouTube page.

And more articles can be found at:

https://www.ucc.org/afro-christian-traditions-status-as-distinct-ucc-stream-gets-historical-council-support/

https://sojo.net/magazine/july-2023/what-fifth-stream-united-church-christ

https://www.ucc.org/afro-christian-tradition-helps-define-ucc-says-delk-during-synod-luncheon/

https://www.ucc.org/from-synod-stage-dorhauer-apologizes-to-afro-christian-convention-for-rewriting-of-our-history/

Even though this year's Black history month is about to end, we all still have much to learn, much to apologize for, and much to celebrate. I encourage you not to stop learning and growing in your awareness of all that separates us, and all binds us together in the United Church of Christ, where we believe that in Christ there is no east or west, or north or south, but one great fellowship of love throughout the world.

Shalom,

Nora

Rev. Dr. Nora Foust

Associate Conference Minister

Penn Central ConferenceRegistration 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/

One Great HOUR OF SHARING | ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING 75 1949-2024

OFFERING DATE MARCH 10, 2024

March 10, 2024 is One Great Hour of Sharing

The proceeds from this offering channels resources for international programs in health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response, administered by Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources.



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST + THAT THEY MAY ALL BE ONE ®