



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

...equipping and empowering congregations and clergy for the declaration and demonstration of the courageous love of Christ!

A Message from PCC

Hartman Center

October 30, 2019

Dear friends of Penn Central Conference,

I have just returned from a week at Lancaster Theological Seminary where I was in class for more than 10 hours each day. This intensive week of face-to-face class is complemented by an additional 9 weeks of on-line work and study as I work toward a Doctorate in Ministry. My elective this term is theological improv and this week I have to write about a theological concept using an embodied, creative metaphor. I thought this would be a good week to share a little of my studies with readers of the e-news, so here it is, folks - "Sweet Tea and Atonement."

"He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' 'I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God.'" Luke 18:13b-14a

"We recognize our own sin and our need for God's grace." -UCC Historical Council, Foundational Theological Claims (2019)

Atonement: at - ONE - ment with God

Last Saturday I was working on my sermon for Sunday morning and making a gallon of tea. I had been praying over this Luke passage for a week as I sat in class seeking a word from the Spirit. I had also been reading the new theological statements from the UCC Historical Council that I would be presenting at an association meeting that Sunday afternoon. I wanted something more than a 'be humble' sermon for this text and I was desperate for a way to talk about these broad, counter-cultural claims that didn't name the big stuff like the Trinity or Atonement or the Sacraments.

I took a break to go make the tea as the aroma filled the house. While pouring the hot tea over the measured Splenda in the jug, the disruption of the liquid was all that was needed to turn the Splenda flakes into liquid that joined seamlessly with the tea.

I guess I was so stuck on my sermon and reaching for anything the Spirit might be sending my way, the way the tea absorbed the Splenda and became one as I poured made me almost weepy as I

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Upcoming Retreats

The PCC Confirmation Retreat will be held March 27 - 29, 2020 at Hartman Center. This weekend is always a great opportunity for our confirmands to explore "Being The Church" and to connect with other youth.

Planning for this retreat is done by the Pastors and/or youth leaders of the participating churches. We will gather for an initial planning meeting on Monday November 18 from 1 - 3 pm at the conference office, and Zoom will be available.

Please contact Pastor Patty Dodds as soon as possible if your church is interested in participating. 717-502-2246 or Program@HartmanCenter.com

2020 VISION Retreat is for everyone willing to work for the future of Hartman Center to spend time together developing ACTION PLANS for 2020. December 6, 2019 at 2:00PM through noon on December 8, 2019 Register online.

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...

Mount Zion UCC, Spring Grove

Saint Paul's UCC, Spring Grove

Saint Peter's (Lischey's) UCC, Spring Grove

Trinity Roths UCC, Spring Grove



Message from the Conference cont'

thought about how God's mercy, grace and love makes me at one with God. My composition has to change, just as that of the sweetener, in order to be at one with God. Something disruptive has to occur.

I think of atonement as the way in which one understands being brought into a state of being at-one with God. This happens because of God's grace. The sugar is changed to sweet tea simply by the disruptive addition of the liquid. In Jesus' parable, the tax collector is justified by the admission of his need.

Start a discussion in your church about how you understand this movement of becoming at ONE with God.

Shalom,

Nora

Town Halls

You are invited to gather with others from your association (clergy and lay people alike) for fellowship and a light dinner of soup, sandwiches and dessert. (See dates and locations below.)

Conversation with Rev. Carrie Call will follow our dinner. She will provide updates about Penn Central Conference, touching on topics such as new staffing, updated strategic planning, and the Hartman Center.

Please bring your questions and concerns as well as your enthusiasm and ideas for our Conference!

Lebanon Association
Wednesday November 13th, 6:00PM
Quentin UCC, Quentin

Upcoming Events

34th Annual Christmas Bazaar
November 2 8:00AM - 1:00PM

Salem UCC, Roherstown
2312 Marietta Ave, Lancaster PA

Devonshire Fair
November 6 & 7 9:30AM - 7:00PM

Colonial Park UCC
5000 Devonshire Road Harrisburg, PA 17109

Upcoming Events

Check out other upcoming events on our website:
<https://pccucc.org/calendar/>

Read our full weekly eNews:
<https://pccucc.org/enews-archive/>

Sign up for our weekly eNews:
Link at bottom of any page on www.pccucc.org

More From Hartman Center

Fall Women's Retreat: Living Well—In The Moment

Friday the 15th at 7 p.m. to Sunday the 17th at 11 a.m.
Leaders: Sue D'heedene and Winnie Kowalik. Register online

Fall Youth Retreat: Never Alone

Friday November 15, 2019 7:00 PM - Sunday, November 17, 2019 11:00 AM register online

Men's Retreat: Seasons of a Man's Life

Friday, January 17, 2020 at 7PM - Sunday January 19, 2020 at 1PM register online

Contact us!

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