



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

August 21, 2019

Dear friends of Penn Central Conference,

A passage from the prophet Habakkuk has been on my mind recently. The very last verse of chapter three reads, "God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, and makes me tread upon the heights." I grew up seeing and watching deer and have seen them navigate some remarkable terrain. Even fawns can quickly navigate over rock and roots soon after birth. So I have been praying these days for God to make my feet like those of a deer. There is some rocky terrain to navigate in the church these days. In order to make our way through this challenging landscape, it is critical to be attentive, nimble and agile.

We know the landscape of the Penn Central Conference has its own unique terrain. In the midst of this environment I am focused on several priorities – the Structure of Staffing and the Hartman Center are two, which play key roles in a third priority – Strategic Planning. These were originally presented to me by the Executive Committee along with a few others. My three-week experience as your Transitional Conference Minister already shows these rising to the top.

They are interrelated and complex. For example, consider staffing for a moment. Re-visioning structure entails navigating all of the needs of the conference and then prioritizing them. As you know we have limited resources. So how do we decide which of those needs are the top priority? Is it Search and Call? Church vitality? Clergy development? Lay education? Youth ministries?



Continued on back...

Labor Day Weekend Fishing

Friday, August 30, 2019 beginning at 7 p.m. - Monday, September 2 ending at 9 a.m. register online.

Forgiveness: A Path for Healing

Monday, September 23, 2019 at 2 p.m. - Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at 3 p.m. register online.

A Marriage Enrichment Weekend - "It's a Wonderful Life"

Friday, November 8, 2019 at 7 p.m. - Sunday, November 10, 2019 at 3 p.m. register online.

COMING IN NOVEMBER: The FALL WOMEN'S RETREAT

is planned for Nov. 15-17. (Friday the 15th at 7 p.m. to Sunday the 17th at 11 a.m.) Leaders will be Sue D'heedene and Winnie Kowalik.

COMING IN JANUARY 2020: The FIRST ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT

January 17-19 Planned by pastors and laymen of the Conference. Possible theme: Seasons of a Man's Life. Watch for details this fall.

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...

Zion (Gosherts) UCC, Mt. Zion

Myerstown UCC, Myerstown

Emmanual UCC, New Berlin

Zion UCC, Newburg



A Message from PCC, continued

Stewardship? Fund raising? All have been suggested to me as priorities. How we answer the staffing question will influence other decisions we need to make. Discernment always includes some prioritizing. It also acknowledges competing values and expectations. Most of all it requires listening to a variety of voices. Careful discernment can lead to wise strategic planning. And strategic planning, when done well, lays a path through the terrain.

Questions of staffing, the future of the Hartman Center, our financial stability, and the like do not exist in a vacuum. They are enmeshed in a landscape that is shifting due to changes in demographics, values, economics, civic engagement and more. Just as deer have learned to adapt (very well) to changing environments and habitat, so must we. We cannot thrive if we do not acknowledge and live into a new habitat. My approach in these next few months will be to listen carefully to the voices around me, sort out competing values and expectations, and prioritize needs. We will move through this discernment together. I will also practice what I call "patient persistence." This means staying calm, doing the necessary research, taking the time needed for good decision-making, and speaking the truth in love, all while maintaining forward momentum.

As the doe makes her way up and over the rocky hillside, she moves forward with care and awareness. As God guides her feet, may God guide mine as well.

In Peace,

Carrie

Transitional Conference Minister

Check out upcoming events on our website:

<https://pccucc.org/calendar/>

Register for events online:

<https://pccucc.org/register-for-an-event/>

Or call the office - 717-652-1560

Read our full weekly eNews:

<https://pccucc.org/enews-archive/>

Thank you for your generosity!

Thank you for your continued generosity!!

We just reached \$6,720 of the \$7,000 needed for the Craft Shop.

That means less than \$300 left! Any funds raised in excess of the Craft Shop project will be used for renovations of Michaux Lodge.

No contribution is too small. Make checks payable to Penn Central Conference and send them to Penn Central Conference, 900 S. Arlington Ave. Rm. 227A, Harrisburg, PA 17109.

We expect renovations to be made this summer and early fall with a special dedication to occur at the Hartman Center Fall Festival, October 12, 2019.



Contact us!

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