



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

A Message from PCC

August 4, 2021

Members and friends of Penn Central Conference-

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord.” Jeremiah 29:11-14

I never grow tired of reading this passage. In fact, it's one of my favorites, right up there with Psalm 139 and Romans 8 and Philippians 4. Especially now in this continued uncertain time of COVID variants, new infections in younger people, and vaccination holdouts, I need the reminder that God holds my—all of our—future. I find it interesting that God says first that God has plans “to give you hope and a future.” Only after that, “then—you will call on my me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you.” That brings even more hope. I don't have to beg God to give me hope and a future. God first gives me re-assurances that hope and a future are in God's plan. And those re-assurances will inspire prayer, because God reached out to me first.

Isn't that what any of us needs? Especially now? As we are uncertain about the future of our nation's medical and mental health, as well as political health; as we are uncertain about if we can continue to worship in person; as we continue to wonder what the “new normal” will look like in our individual, family, and church lives?

I believe I am remiss if I assume our needs of God are cookie-cutter collective, even though we all struggle and strain in the continued unknown. The future is always unknown except to God, and

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Outdoor Ministries

In partnership with Lutheran Camping Corporation

CAMPFIRE WORSHIP

August 15; 8-9 p.m.

Come to the Wittel Farm for summer Campfire worship nights.

THE GROWING PROJECT

Volunteer for The Growing Project through October! This project reclaims a portion of the acreage for farming. The crops harvested are donated to assist those in need in Lancaster County.

Learn more here: <https://pccucc.org/outdoor-ministry/>

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. Matthew (Coleman's) UCC, Gratz

Bethel UCC, Spring Grove

Mt. Zion UCC, Spring Grove

St. Paul's UCC, Spring Grove



Message from the Conference cont'

any of us has our own needs and uncertainties about our future.

So let me pose the question: what do you need? What do you need from God in order to indeed receive hope for your future? Do you need healing from grieving around illness and death in your recent (or distant) memory? Do you need rest and renewal from the toil and struggle of putting one foot in front of the other? Do you need wisdom and vision to carve a path for your church as you discern your care for your people and ministry for those in the greater community? Do you need courage to continue masking, prepare for your children to return to school, have faith in your neighbor's decision around safe gathering?

If I am to interpret God's response to those needs: I believe the prophet suggests to us that as God yearns to re-assure us to know that God has plans for a hopeful future, God also yearns to meet our needs. As we can take that in, then we can come to the God of re-assurance and deep love and care to give us whatever we need to heal, to rest and renew, to gain wisdom and vision, to have a measure of courage. Perhaps we can come to God on our own. Maybe we need to pray with others. Maybe we need to have others pray for us when we do not have words. However you come to God, come with the deep assurance, the profound heart and spirit knowledge, that God meets you where you are, is yearning to give you hope beyond hope, and is eager to meet your every need.

May it be so.

With prayers for deep blessings to each of you,

Marisa

The Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola
Associate Conference Minister
Penn Central Conference



Local Church Events

"Dr. Joe" Utterback live in concert!

Friday, August 20, 7PM - Free Admission

Colonial Park UCC, Harrisburg

2021 Old Zion Reformed Church Anniversary Service

Theme: "Don't Join the Cloister"

Sunday, September 12th at 4:00 p.m.

General Synod

Our Synod delegates met online and in person in July. One of the tasks of the delegates was voting on resolutions. Over the next few weeks, many of your delegates will share a brief overview of resolutions, the action taken at Synod, and if available, some resources for learning more. Some of them may inspire you to learn more! Catch them in the online eNews, to subscribe email pkeller@pccucc.org or at pccucc.org/enews-archive

Contact us!

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