



PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE



Empowering churches to proclaim the reconciling love of Christ.

A Message from PCC

June 23, 2021

Friends & Members of Penn Central Conference,

...many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all of this? What is the wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands!" (Mark 6:2b NRSV)

Chapter 5 of Mark's gospel is a chapter packed with healing. Jesus, after calming the storm on the see of Galilee, comes ashore in the land of the Gerasenes (which is Gentile territory) and is accosted by a man possessed with demons. The man lives in the tombs and no matter what anyone does, he breaks all chains and raves wildly. Jesus sends the legion of demons out of him into a herd of swine, who rush into the sea. The man, now "clothed and in his right mind" wants to join Jesus but is sent instead to tell his friends of the mercies of God.

Jesus crosses back to the other side of the sea, back into Jewish territory. In the crowds that swell up around him, Jairus comes and pleads for Jesus to come and see his daughter who is dying. As Jesus moves in this direction, a woman with a flow of blood seeks healing by touching his cloak. Immediately sensing that "power had gone out from him" Jesus turns and seeks her out. She comes forward and confesses to touching him. He proclaims that her faith has made her well.

In the meantime, Jairus' daughter has died. Jairus' friends claim that he shouldn't bother Jesus any longer, but Jesus goes to his home and in one of the most moving vignettes in the gospel, he takes the girl by the hand and lifts her up to life.

The healings in chapter 5 tell us something about power. Early in chapter 5 the demons have power over the Gerasene man. The woman

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Outdoor Ministries

In partnership with Lutheran Camping Corporation

Summer Camp: REGISTER ANYTIME!

The 2021 summer camp schedule is set! There are camps for all ages and interests at both Kirchenwald and Nawakwa. Check out what is offered online.

Hartman Center Spirit Week:

Week of August 8 at Camp Mount Luther, Mifflinburg.

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...

Salem UCC, Pillow

Trinity UCC, Dalmatia

Quentin UCC, Quentin

St. Peter's UCC, Rebersburg



Message from the Conference cont'

with the flow of blood is powerless against her own body. The little girl has succumbed to the power of death. Moving forward by just one chapter we learn of the death of John the Baptist, victim of the power of Herod.

All the situations in Chapter 5 appear permanent: madness, terminal illness, destitution, death. They also represent all people: Gentiles, Jews, man, woman, a child. They demonstrate how suffering is shared and experienced within a community (the man and his village), within an individual (the woman), and within a family (the child). All also demonstrate something being awry. Each illustration shows us something that is somehow wrong. The man is out of his mind, the woman is deeply ill, and a child's death is never 'normal.' Despite the apparent hopelessness of all three, Jesus heals them. He restores them. His power is used for restoration, for setting things aright, for bringing people back into a state of harmony. Jesus' use of power is a stark – and beautiful – contrast to the power of demons, sickly bodies, a child's death or a king's whim.

The chapter is deeply humbling. I find I must ask myself, how am I using the power I have been given? We call upon the Holy Spirit to empower us. For what will we use that power? I confess I have not always used my power to lift someone by the hand or turn toward someone in need. Yet Mark reminds me that those who follow Jesus are called to use their power to set things right. To engage the darkness and the suffering and seek restoration. We may only have small reserves of power, but our tiniest acts of restoration can bring Jesus' healing, wholeness, harmony and balance to a world in pain.

Peace,

Carrie

Rev. Dr. Carrie Call

Conference Minister

Penn Central Conference



Local Church Events

Chapel Hill UCC, Lemoyne Open House

July 18 10AM Worship service

Afterwards enjoy Farm Show milk shake from the Dairymen's Assoc. vendor truck and a delicious sandwich from the Bucky's Festival Food truck. We will have games available and will be giving tours of our new facility. This is a community event! Everyone is welcome.

Go Green Sunday Mt. Zion UCC, York

August 8, 2021, 1:00PM-3:00PM

Jim Antel will join via Zoom for a conversation about climate change, Penn State will share about pollinator gardens and more.

Save the date

UCC's General Synod 33, "Rooted In Love", will be occurring July 11-18, 2021. Learn more at general-synod.org

Contact us!

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