PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

A Message from PCC

October 04, 2023

Members and Friends of Penn Central Conference,

"No one finds security in wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved." (Proverbs 12:3)

"The wicked covet the proceeds of wickedness, but the root of the righteous bears fruit." (Proverbs 12:12)

Rarely do we hear sermons about the Book of Proverbs. Yet this book is a central piece of scripture's 'wisdom literature' alongside Ecclesiastes, Job, Song of Solomon, and various psalms. Proverbs is notable for its earthy advice and was intended as practical instruction for ordinary citizens – not the high born or highly educated. Lately I have been delving into Proverbs with the assistance of Ellen F. Davis's terrific commentary.[i] It's been a spiritual and psychological feast!

This week I focused on Proverbs 12 and the idea of the "root of the righteous." There's no doubt that rootedness is a central concept in our faith. We speak often of being rooted in God, which denotes security, righteousness, and stability. That last word, stability, is one worthy of exploration. In the Benedictine monastic communities, those who would join took three vows: stability, obedience, and conversion of lifestyle (fidelity to monastic way of life). What would it mean to vow stability?

Being 'stable' in a monastic community meant that I (as a monk) would be rooted in God in the community/place where I have committed myself. I would trust that I am where I am supposed to be and that God is present here. Davis refers to this as recognizing that "God is not elsewhere." I am called to be in this place and time and I will serve from within this

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Contact us!

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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...

Emmanuel UCC, Hanover

Grace UCC, Hanover

St. David's (Shermans) UCC, Hanover

St. Paul's (Dubs) UCC, Hanover



place and time. She writes stability/rootedness, "… is the decision to accept the present situation (with all its limitations) as providing the necessary conditions for faithful living." Stability means having the grace to be where I am.[ii]

That is no easy feat when we spend much time thinking/pining about being elsewhere. I would hazard a guess that for many of us, we think about what comes next, where I'm hoping to be, what I want next, how I wish I were, and so forth quite a lot. We also spend time (with the help pf advertisers) longing to be other than who we are, especially physically. Yet longing and seeking to be different people hamper our ability to be fully present to what or where God has called us to in that moment. Davis writes, "We cannot act justly toward others, we cannot do any substantial work for the common good, if we are continually running after some new fantasy image of ourselves. Achieving single-mindedness is always a matter of maintaining a firm inner resistance against false self-images."[iii]

Our ability to remain rooted in God (the root of the righteous) is a foil to the voices of ourselves and society that clamor for us to be elsewhere. As the Benedictine monks were called to live, so we would be wise to reflect carefully on what it would mean for us to be stable – to be rooted where we are now and trust that God is present there. For the root of the righteous will bear fruit – or - what Davis calls 'our work for the common good'!

Peace,

Carrie

Rev. Dr. Carrie Call

Conference Minister

Penn Central Conference

[i] Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon (Westminster/John Knox 2000)

[ii] Page 83.

[iii] Ibid.

Register for the following at https://pccucc.org/register-for-an-event/

PCC Fall Budget Meeting

November 11, 2023 9:30 AM

This year's Annual Meeting included a vote for the Penn Central Conference to have a Budget Meeting in the fall. Each authorized minister is a voting member and each church is allowed two delegates to vote. These can be, but do not have to be, the same delegates as went to Annual Meeting. We do still need to reach quorum.

This meeting will be on Zoom only, and will include a budget presentation and vote. We anticipate it to take no more than 60 - 90 minutes.

Synod Seconds – A Keystone-wide Conversation

Join conference staff and delegates from across the keystone state as we explore implementation of General Synod Resolutions and looks at snap-shots of wider-church life. We'll be starting with 3 zooms this fall, September 11, October 16, and November 13 from 6:30-8 pm. All are welcome. Please register.

Choose from three in person and one Zoom Town Hall to learn more about the **Keystone Project**, the current working group's assessments and how they are visioning "Together we are stronger: the Keystone Conference."

October 11, 6:30PM; St. John's UCC, Lewisburg (in-person only)

October 18, 6:30PM - St. Paul's UCC, Mechanicsburg (in-person only)

November 1, 6:30PM - Zoom Only

November 14, 6:30PM - Quentin UCC, Quentin (in-person only)