BUSINESS ITEMS
for the 2021 Spring Conference Meeting

ADVANCE REPORTS

2021 Spring Conference Meeting
Saturday, April 17, 2021 - VIA Zoom
9AM to 3:30PM

THEME: Blessed to be the Children of God

Scripture: Galatians 3:26-29
26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Keynote Speaker: Robert Jones
Author of White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity
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Tentative Agenda
Virtual Spring Conference Meeting – April 17, 2021

Tentative Agenda
8:30 a.m. Log in Time for Panelist and Attendees
9:00 a.m. Welcome
9:05 a.m. Call the Spring Conference Meeting to Order
  - Appoint Parliamentarian
  - Adopt Agenda
  - Registrar’s Report
  - Define the Bar of the House
  - Adopt Business Guidelines
  - Accept the Minutes of the 2020 Fall Conference Meeting
  - Receive the Other Report found in the Advance Reports
  - Accept the Treasurer’s Report
  - OCWM and 5 for 5 Recognitions
9:30 a.m. Keynote by Robert Jones
10:15 a.m. Q&A with Robert Jones
10:30 a.m. Break
10:45 a.m. Worship (includes Communion)
11:45 a.m. Meditation/Stretch (Break)
12:00 p.m. Workshops with mid-point break
1:15 p.m. Lunch
2:00 p.m. Business
  - Recognition of Board and Committee Members Who Have Completed Their Service
  - Nominating Committee Report
  - New Pastors/Anniversaries/Remembrances
  - Open and Affirming (O&A) Churches
  - Recognition of Churches/Legacies (St. James, Shepton and Hope, Allentown)
  - General Synod Updates
  - PA Council of Churches
  - Celebrating the Conference
  - Installation of Officers, Board and Committee Members
3:30 p.m. Conclusion

Officers of the Penn Northeast Conference
Moderator: Mr. Douglas Taylor
Assistant Moderator: Rev. Dr. James Gottwald
Secretary: Ms. Helena Lindquist
Treasurer: Rev. Martin Nuscher
Conference Minister & President: Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates
BUSINESS GUIDELINES FOR CONFERENCE MEETING

(1) All proceedings of a Conference meeting shall be governed by the parliamentary procedures in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised 12th Edition, unless otherwise provided for in these guidelines.

(2) Panelists (voting delegates) have voice and vote. Those who want to speak shall secure permission from the Master Teller through the Zoom Chat Function.

(3) In order to cast a vote, one must have been named by a local church as its delegate (or alternate if the delegate is absent), or be an authorized minister with standing in the Penn Northeast Conference, or be a lay member of the Conference Board.

(4) Only the votes of those qualified to vote and within the declared bar of the house which is the Zoom Panelists will be counted on any issue. Voting will be done by polling (virtually) or raising of the official delegate card for those physically present.

(5) When a motion is introduced, the person speaking shall be limited to a maximum of five (5) minutes for the initial presentation. Anyone speaking to an issue already introduced shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) minutes. No previous speaker to a specific issue shall be permitted to speak again until all who want to speak to that issue have had an opportunity to do so. Attendees may request their chat to be spoken by the Master Teller.

(6) The right to limit the time for discussion shall be vested in the presiding officer.

(7) All amendments and main motions from Panelists shall be presented in writing to the Secretary in the Chat Function of the Webinar.

(8) Members of the Budget Committee shall be available at the Conference meeting to discuss any pertinent items relating to the proposed budget.

(9) The Officers of the Conference Board will serve as the Business Committee. It will receive all business items, recommendations, overtures, proposals, resolutions, etc., and determine when they are to be considered by the Conference. It shall also arrange business items in such a way that duplication may be avoided and the agenda expedited.

(10) All resolutions, proposals, etc. submitted should be in the Conference Office prior to the Conference Meeting.

(11) The Conference Board and Officers shall serve as the Business Committee during the Conference Meeting.

(12) Any resolution not accepted for consideration shall be referred to the Conference Board for consideration and possible referral to the Conference at a later meeting.
Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ
2020 Fall Conference Meeting
Saturday, November 7, 2020 ----- 9AM – 3PM
Via Zoom & Good Shepherd UCC, Slatington

Call to Order
Moderator Elect Douglas Taylor called the Fall Conference Meeting business session to order at 11:06 a.m. after a worship service where Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates was installed as the Settled PNEC Conference Minister. His next action was to appoint the Rev. Dr. David DeRemer as Parliamentarian.

Adoption of the Agenda
After referring delegates to the agenda, he asked if anyone had changes or additions to it; and hearing none, he called for a motion to approve it. Rev. Todd Fennell moved to accept the agenda and Rev. James Robison seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

Registrar’s Report
Rev. Dr. Joanne Marchetto gave the Registrar’s Report:
Total Registration (as of 11/6/20) - 149
  Authorized Ministers – 101
  Lay Delegates – 21
  Youth Delegates – 2
  Alt. & Youth Visitors & Advisors – 3
  Alternate Delegates and Visitors – 15
  PNEC Staff – 5
  Total Churches Represented – 71
The moderator declared a quorum was present.

Bar of the House and Business Guidelines
The Bar of the House was defined as the Webinar Panelist Platform and the sanctuary of Good Shepherd UCC. Doug Lander moved to adopt the Business Guidelines as outlined in the Advanced Reports (including electronic voting directions) and Rev. Dr. Bruce Stevenson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

State of the Conference Report
The Moderator called on Bonnie Bates to deliver a report on the state of the Penn Northeast Conference. She referred to the Conference Minister’s Report for 2019 on pages 23-25 in the Advanced Reports, and then covered activities and accomplishments during each month of 2020. Although many efforts were delayed or suspended due to the onset of the pandemic, the first quarter did allow for increased ecumenical and interfaith outreach to establish a foundation for future endeavors. Among other accomplishments, was a successful trip to Southern India with the Ecumenical Mission Team and Penn Southeast Conference that resulted in covenants of support for future commitments to partnership. Since March, the work of the Conference has continued, although on a restricted basis and with many adjustments and sadness over the suffering the virus engendered. She highlighted some progress toward goals and optimism prompted by the ingenuity, flexibility and cooperation observed across the Conference, and shared her hopefulness for 2021.

Recognition of the Ministry of Rev. Gilberto Garcia-Rodriguez
She then asked Rev. Garcia-Rodriguez to step forward for recognition of his years of service as an
Associate Conference Minister for Outreach and New Church Starts and highlighted his work, especially in efforts such as the Amigos de Guatemala. Gilberto will be leaving his position at the end of 2020 and a service of farewell will be held at his Home Church, New Creation UCC on December 6, 2020.

Minutes of the Fall 2019 Conference Meeting
Helena Lindquist, Secretary to the Board, referred to the minutes from the November 2, 2019 Conference Meeting. Rev. James Robison moved to accept the minutes as presented and Rev. Becky Sausser seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Secretary then directed attention to the other reports from all areas of the Conference, except for the Treasurer’s Report, and the Moderator called for questions or comments on them. Rev. Martin Nuscher made a motion to accept these reports and Rev. Todd Fennell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report
The Moderator asked Rev. Martin Nuscher to present the Treasurer’s Report for the year ended in 2019. He mentioned that, because the Spring Conference meeting was cancelled, this report was now an historical recap. He only assumed the Treasurer’s position in November 2019 and that, plus the challenges encountered in the current year caused by the pandemic, meant the past year was a steep learning curve for him. Still, even though Income for the year fell short of what was projected by $76 thousand, the Conference ended the year with a shortfall of only $19 thousand dollars due to careful management of expenses. Rev. Rich Teitsworth made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report and Rev. Becky Sausser seconded it. The motion passed with three no votes and two abstentions.

Proposed Budget for 2021
Rev. Nuscher returned to the podium to review the proposed Operating Budget for 2021 after a break for lunch. It was compiled by the Budget and Finance Committee and approved by the Conference Board at their September 15th meeting. He pointed to two areas in the income section that were new - Grant income in the amount of $30,000, and additional income of $30,000 generated from the efforts of the Generosity Team which would help to balance the budget. He mentioned that the expense budget included provision for an audit of the Conference finances for the first time in several years, and he highlighted some other areas where changes had been made, and then asked if there were any questions. Rev. Becky Sausser moved to approve the proposed budget and Rev. Dr. Joanne Marchetto seconded the motion. The motion passed with only two no votes and four abstentions.

Generosity Team Introduction of the “Friends of the Conference” Program
Rev. Becky Sausser launched this new individual giving initiative to help augment diminishing OCWM funding by encouraging individuals to contribute directly to support the Conference. She emphasized that if each member of a congregation in the 130 churches of PNEC gave just $10, it would result in $330,000 more dollars to support the Conference. Or, by contributing an amount equal to what you spent on an occasional trip to Starbucks, you could accomplish amazing things through the Conference. She illustrated some of these points with a slide presentation and mentioned that Sunday bulletin inserts, This Week in PNEC articles, and other promotional materials will be utilized to spread the word about Friends of the Conference.

Nominating Committee Report
The Moderator then asked Rev. Todd Fennell to come forward with the report from the Nominating Committee. First, he read the list of individuals who completed their terms of service on various bodies within the Conference earlier this year, and extended thanks for their time and commitment. Again, due to the cancellation of the Spring Conference Meeting, the Board had to vote on an interim basis to appoint the slate of nominees the Committee had recommended in April to fill many vacant positions on the
Conference Board and Committees Teams. This current vote served to confirm those appointments. Because this slate of candidates came from the Committee in the form of a motion, no second was required. Votes were cast and the motion passed unanimously with only two abstentions. Next, Rev. Fennell presented the slate of nominees in three different categories to represent PNEC at the General Synod meetings scheduled for 2021 and 2023. The moderator gave specific instructions to the voters to cast their ballots for these positions. The results would be announced later in the meeting.

**Bylaw Revision**

The Moderator called on Rev. Jeff Brinks, Chair of the Committee on Ministry to present the requested change to the PNEC Bylaws. The change/addition is to Article VII, Section 805, and concerns the necessary quorum required at Ecclesiastical Council meetings for the purpose of approving a candidate to Ordination as an Authorized Minister. Rev. Brinks referred to page 16 of the Advance Reports for the recommended wording of the revision. The Moderator pointed out that the Conference Board had already approved this recommendation, and that it had come from the Committee on Ministry as a motion to be voted on by the Conference delegates and therefore did not require a second. The vote was taken, and the motion passed with only two no votes and two abstentions.

**Ministry Recognitions**

Moderator Taylor asked Rev. Robison and Rev. Dr. Stevenson to announce the names of authorized ministers celebrating anniversaries of ordination. These individuals are listed on page 17 of the Advanced Reports. (Note: the name of Rev. Edward Livingston, 10-year anniversary, 11-14-2010, was inadvertently omitted from the listing.) They read the names aloud and a brief video was shown of the recent presentation of recognition plaques to Rev. Wilbur Albright for his 50th Anniversary of Ordination, to Rev. Don Quayle for his 55th Anniversary, and to Rev. William Ellsworth for his 65th Anniversary.

**Other Recognitions**

Rev. Dr. Bates listed new ministers in the Conference and those newly ordained. They include: Gary Barraco, First Church, Berwick; Marian Johnson, Church of the Manger, Bethlehem; Ashley Werkheiser, Christ Church, Schoenersville; Dean Luther, Zion Church, Ashland; Richard Mollica, St. John’s, Farmersville/Easton; Janet Newett, St. John’s, Fogelsville; Rebecca Sausser, New Bethel Church, Kempten; Barbara Rowlett, Dille Parish, LeRaysville; Heather Hunnicutt, Salem Church, Pocono Pines; Ken Fuller, Sot. John, Riegelsville; Monte Schroeder, Friedens Church, Slatington; Bonnie Moore, St. John’s Church, Fullerton/Whitehall; Emily Hall, Hope Church, Wind Gap; Matthew Gorkos, Church of the Good Shepherd, Alburtis; Edward Livingston, Dryland, Nazareth; Linda Lennon, retired; and Becca Stephens, retired. Ordinations included: Michelle Funk, Rebecca Sausser and Sean Drummond.

She then remembered all those PNEC pastors who died since the last Conference meeting and listed their date of death: Tom Thomas, May 17th, 2019; Irvin Moore, Jr., July 20, 2019; Curtis Sandrock, November 3, 2019; Marshall Riu, Jr., May 6, 2020; Loretta Roberts, May 7, 2020; George Yoder, June 1, 2020; and Sterling Schnell, August 25, 2020.

**OCWM and Five for Five Giving in 2019**

Seven congregations in PNEC were recognized for OCWM donations over $10,000. Ten other congregations were recognized for being in the top ten for per capita giving to OCWM. And forty-two churches gained recognition for contributing to OCWM and all four special UCC offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, the Christmas Fund, Strengthen the Church, and Neighbors in Need. All these congregations are listed on page 18 of the Advanced Reports.

**PNEC Racial Justice Commitment Resolution**

The Moderator called on Rev. Bob Gutekunst, Chair of the Racial Justice Ministry Team, to present the
Racial Justice Commitment Resolution. Rev. Gutekunst explained that the resolution states PNEC’s commitment to becoming a Racial Justice Conference, regardless of the length of time it will take to achieve this identity. Part of that commitment is to education and working together with interfaith, ecumenical, and community partners toward that end. The full Resolution is found on page 20 and 21 of the Advance Reports. Rev. Rich Teitsworth moved to approve the resolution and Rev. Dr. Stevenson seconded it. The motion passed with only two no votes and five abstentions.

**General Synod Election Results**
After a tally of the votes, the General Synod delegates were announced. Those attending in the Clergy category will be: Pastor Janet Newett, Rev. Teresa Martin, and Rev. Josh Knappenberger. Those serving as Laity delegates will be Doug Lander, Thomas Moyer, Patti Hoyt, Mandy Muschett, Helena Lindquist, Jackson Pyne, and Stephanie Creyer. And those serving as “under 30” delegates will be Jordan Smith, Melissa Mendiolina, and Rev. Becky Sausser.

**Installation of Officers, Board and Committee Members, and General Synod Delegates**
Rev. Dr. Bates asked all who were appointed or elected at the meeting, including General Synod Delegates, and all who are currently serving in positions with the Conference, to stand and follow the Installation outline beginning on page 21 of the Advance reports. She led all these leaders through the covenant promises found there.

**Adjournment**
Moderator Taylor and Rev. Dr. Bates sincerely thanked all those involved in the planning and execution of this meeting, despite all the delays and challenges posed by the pandemic and other events. Special thanks go to staff members Barbara Jennings and Patty Rehrig, Joanne and Jim Marchetto and Doug Lander for coordinating all the technology, and Barbara Hanks, Bob Gutekunst, James Gottwald, and the Conference Planning Team. Rev. Dr. Joanne Marchetto officially passed the gavel to Doug Taylor, and he asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rev. James Robison made the motion and Rev. Martin Nuscher seconded. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 2:47. Moderator Taylor announced the Spring Conference Meeting was scheduled for April 17, 2021 and Conference Minister Bates offered a closing prayer.

Submitted by Helena Lindquist, PNEC Secretary to the Board

**Treasurer’s Reports**
See Separate Document
Nominating Committee Report – Spring 2021
(bio Information follows this report)

Officers:
Moderator, Class of 2022
Mr. Doug Taylor (2)

Assistant Moderator, Class of 2022
Rev. Dr. James Gottwald (2)

Conference Board
Class of 2022 (filling an unexpired term)
Rev. Henry Distler (U)

Class of 2024
Mrs. Tracy Whitehead (1)
Pastor Randy Lentz (2)
Rev. Albert Martin (1)
Mr. Bernard Hobson (1)

Youth:
Mr. Johnathan Deiter
Ms. Jordan Smith

Staff & Personnel Committee
Class of 2024
Mrs. Nancy Kramer Moyer (1)
Rev. Frank Schaffer (2)
Mrs. Barbara Davies (1)

Nominating Committee
Class of 2024
Rev. Denise Fry (1)
Rev. Allan Kramer Moyer (1)
Rev. Scott Brooks Cope (1)

Committee on Ministry
Authorization Working Group
Class of 2023 (filling an unexpired term)
Mr. Samuel Creyer (U)

Class of 2024
Rev. Dr. Don R. Quayle (1)
Mrs. Linda Garber (1)
Mr. Steve Myers (2)
Ms. Trudi Egan (1)
Pastor David Adams (1)

Oversight Working Group
Class of 2023 (filling an unexpired term)
Rev. Larry Pickens (U)

Class of 2024
Mr. Steve Henderson (1)
Mrs. Diane French (1)
Rev. Bruce Stevenson (2)
Rev. Dale Sattizahn (1)
Pastor Kaye Lentz (1)

Local Congregational Support Working Group
Mr. Albert Titus (1)
Mrs. Stephanie Creyer (1)
Rev. Richard Teitsworth (2)
Nominating Committee Report - BIOs of Nominees – Spring 2021

Officers:
Moderator, Class of 2022
Mr. Doug Taylor (2), 26 Willow Drive, Belvidere, NJ 07823
Member St. John, Reigelsville, PA
PNEC: Moderator, General Synod Delegate to General Synod
Church Development & Support Committee Chair, NJ Association, Member CAC Church Development & Support Committee
Local Church: Consistory member and former President, Conference Meeting Delegate, Praize Band & Choir member
Home Phone: 908-750-4727; Email Address: dptaylor16@comcast.net

Assistant Moderator, Class of 2022
Rev. Dr. James Gottwald (2), 1415 Rising Sun Rd., Laurys Station, PA 18059
Pastor of St. John’s UCC Laurys Station, PA 2006- Present
Education: Western Theological Seminary 2002-2004 DMin, Princeton Theological Seminary 1990-93
MDiv, U of Maryland BSAE 1986 1st Career: Dynamics Engineer for Sikorsky Aircraft 1986-1990
Spouse - Susan Gottwald - 1988 - present
Cell 484-357-6154 Pastor@stjohnslaurys.org

Conference Board
Class of 2022 (filling an unexpired term)
Rev. Henry Distler (U), 1144 Morris Lane, Slatonlgton, PA 18080
Member of St. John’s UCC, Slatonlgton
Supply Pastor at Bethel UCC, Slatonlgton
PNEC GTWilliams Scholarship Committee
CP - 610-462-2149 hdistler@ptd.net

Class of 2024
Mrs. Tracy Whitehead (1),10048 Route 414, Canton, PA 17724
Member of Dille Parish UCC LeRaysville, PA
PNEC: Attended 4 National UCC Youth Events, PNEC Coordinator for Florida Youth Event, attended 4 Regional - Youth Events, Attended General Synod in Atlanta and Hartford as a visitor
Local Church: Twice past Board Moderator, 20-year Youth Group Co-Leader, Conference Meeting Delegate
Cell Phone: 570-295-6739 (Doesn’t work at my house.) Home Phone: 570-364-5964;
Email Address: twwhitehead@iul17.org

Pastor Randy Lenz (2),8048 PA Route 873, Slatonlgton, PA 18080
Randy Lentz Authorized Minister Licensed to the PNEC, Previously served at St John’s UCC Howertown, Bethel UCC Slatonlgton, Salem UCC Gilbert, supplies at numerous churches in the conf.
PNEC: PNEC Board of Directors, PNEC Executive Committee
Local Church: member at St. John UCC Laurys Station
Cell Phone: 610-737-7824 Email Address: rlentz@haletrailer.com
Rev. Albert Martin (1), 1102 North New Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018
Member Christ UCC, Bethlehem
Phoebe Allentown Healthcare chaplain
Email address: amartin@pheobe.org

Mr. Bernard Hobson (1), 491 Bossardsville Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Member, Zion UCC, Stroudsburg
610-871-0443 bhobson@ptd.net

Youth on the Conference Board
Mr. Johnathan Deiter, 130 Tittle Road, Saylorsburg, PA 18353
Member of St. John’s UCC, Nazareth
PNEC: Served on the Conference Board as a Youth for the past three years.
Cell: 484-632-8822 email: Dieter.johnathan@gmail.com

Ms. Jordan Smith, 1815 Church Road, Allentown, PA 18104
Member of Jordan UCC, Allentown
PNEC: Previously served on the Conference Board; General Synod Delegate
Cell: 484-622-2001 Email: Jordansmith99@aol.com

Staff & Personnel Committee
Class of 2024
Mrs. Nancy Kramer Moyer (1), 504 S. Emerson Street, Allentown, PA 18104
Nancy Kramer-Moyer moved to the Lehigh Valley in 1986 from NYC as a newly married woman to the Rev. Allan Kramer-Moyer. She had accepted a position as Director of Cancer Care at St. Luke’s Hospital in Fountain Hill. Several years later she decided to be a Home Care Supervising RN, preferring more patient care and less administration. In 1991 she became a certified massage therapist and has had a private practice since then. She retired as an active nurse in 2001. She is a member of St. John’s UCC in Allentown where she has served in many positions as a lay volunteer and has also served PNEC on the COM. She enjoys her family, friends, outdoor activities, and spiritual pursuits.

Rev. Frank Schaffer (2), 112 Spruce Street, Emmaus, PA 18049
Member Solomon’s UCC, Macungie PA
PNEC: Conference Moderator; General Synod delegate; Mission Partnership coordinator
LOCAL CHURCH: Pastor
610.533.1719 solomonspastor@ol.com

Mrs. Barbara Davies (1), 2238 Summit Drive, Hellertown, PA 18055
Lifelong member of Christ UCC, Bethlehem, PA and a resident of Hellertown, PA.
PNEC: I have joyfully served the Conference in several capacities including: 2 terms as a Conference Board Member including service on the Executive Committee and the subcommittee to review the By-Laws. An original member of the GEM Fund Committee responsible for the development of the criteria for the distribution of the Grants serving as the Team Chairperson. YEA Committee- presently serving GTW Scholarship Team- presently serving; Presently filling an unexpired term on the Staff & Personnel Committee now ending. PNEC trained Coach
As a life -long, active member of Christ UCC Bethlehem I have volunteered and served in many ways some include: formerly as a Sunday School teacher and Nursery Volunteer.
Altar Flower coordinator, Hospitality Committee Chair, Book Discussion Leader. I have had the privilege to sit on several Search Committees both for Associate and Senior Pastor selection throughout the years as well as serving as the Chairperson of 2 Director of Music Search Committees
Cell # is: 610-360-3955, Home # is: 610-838-6142 Email: bjdavies3@verizon.net.
Nominating Committee
Class of 2024

Rev. Denise Fry (1), 125 West 4th Street, East Greenville, PA 18041
Member of Trinity UCC, Quakertown, PA
PNEC: PNEC Board Member for 2 terms, past involvement in PNEC Youth Ministry Retreats
Local Church and Ministry: Pastor of Trinity UCC (Pleasant Valley) for 12 years, Interim at Old Zionsville UCC, Associate Pastor of Trinity Great Swamp for almost 2 years, Hospice Chaplain and Social Worker for Sacred Heart Hospice and Home Care, TESOL Teacher in Russia for 2 years
Married with 3 Grandchildren & recently retired to spend more time caregiving for older family members.
Cell Phone: 484-553-6841, Email Address: revfry@comcast.net

Rev. Dr. Allan Kramer Moyer (1), 504 S. Emerson Street, Allentown, PA 18104
I was ordained in 1971 and came to PNEC in 1986 when I was called as Associate Director of Pastoral Care at Lehigh Valley Hospital. I have served as Director of Pastoral Care at Easton Hospital (1989-96) and Phoebe Ministries (1996-2011), where I developed the CPE program.
I am currently retired from full time ministry. I have served on the PNEC Nominating Committee in the 1990s, and was chair of the PNEC Licensed Ministry In Care Committee from 2000 to 2006. My wife Nancy and I have two adult children, three grandchildren and are members of St John’s UCC in Allentown.
610-434-0534 ankm@verizon.net

Rev. Dr. Scott Brooks Cope (1), 444 Laurel Road, Lehighton, PA 18235
Member of St. Matthew’s UCC, Kunkletown
Director of Pastoral Care for Phoebe Ministries, Allentown, PA
APC Board Certified Chaplain, ACPE Certified Educator, Member of Presbytery of St. Augustine, PCUSA and dual-standing in PNEC.
UCC – past General Synod Delegate; Council for Health and Human Services Ministries voting member
PNEC – Served on Staff and Personnel committee –chair
Cell: 904-568-2052 Email: scope@phoebe.org

Committee on Ministry
Authorization Working Group

Class of 2023 (filling an unexpired term)

Mr. Samuel H. Creyer, 5330 Towanda Drive, Bethlehem, PA 18017
Member Church of the Manger, U.C.C., Bethlehem, PA
PNEC: former heartsounds music at past PNEC events
Local Church: Council Mbr., Convener Adult Reading Group—Books & Breakfast, Co-Choir Director, Visual/Video Arts and Music, serve where gifts are needed.
Phone: 610-262-0914 Cell: 484-695-3416; Email: screyer@outlook.com

Class of 2024

Rev. Dr. Don R. Quayle, 526 Wood Street, Apt. 325, Bethlehem, PA 18018
Member Christ Church UCC, Bethlehem
PNEC: Board of Directors, Moderator, Chair of Church of Ministry Committee, General Synod Delegate to two General Synods; Sr. Pastor Christ UCC, Bethlehem 16 years; Interim Pastor Ben Salem UCC and New Creation UCC, Supply Pastor at numerous churches.
Phone: 610-861-9203; Email daq1199@gmail.com
Mrs. Linda Garber (1), 1750 Amity Lane, Hazleton, PA 18201
Member of Salem UCC, Weatherly, PA
PNEC: Authorization Working Group, Committee on Ministry Local church: Consistory President, Co-
Organist, Money Counter, Conference Meeting Delegate
Cell phone: (570)401-3710
E-mail: byu595@verizon.net

Mr. Steve Myers (2), 978 Barbara Drive, Coplay, PA 18037
Member, Grace UCC, Northampton
Serves as the Music Director at Grace UCC, Northampton
Served three years on the Authorization Working Group
610-261-2118  steve.myers@rcn.com

Ms. Trudi Egan (1), 1422 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18102
Trudi Egan, Member of St. John’s UCC, Allentown
PNEC: Nominating Committee, General Synod delegate
Local Church: Elder, Co-facilitator of Adult Forum, Worship Committee, Fellowship Committee,
Stewardship Committee
Home phone: 610-434-9107.  Email: trudiegan@gmail.com

Pastor David Adams (1), 325 Greenhouse Lane, Zion Grove, PA 17985
Pastor, Grace UCC Millgrove, Catawissa, PA
PNEC: General Synod Delegate to six General Synods, YEA Fund, Board of Directors, Annual Meeting
Planning Team, Committee on Ministry (Authorization Working Group)
Local church: Sunday School leader, Consistory member, Conference Meeting Delegate
Home phone: 570-889-5896; Cell phone: 570-336-3671; Email address: dja22876@yahoo.com

Oversight Working Group
Class of 2023 (filling an unexpired term)
Rev. Larry Pickens (U), 594 Cedar Hill Drive, Allentown PA 18109
Serves as the Executive Director of Pennsylvania Council of Churches, Harrisburg and is the Pastor of
Ziegel UCC, Breinigsville
Cell: 847-687-5897  Email: larrypickens223@yahoo.com

Class of 2024
Mrs. Diane French (1)
Member, First UCC, Hellertown
Cell: 610-360-8897  dcfllf@entropical.com

Mr. Steven Henderson (1), 2039 Church Road, Allentown, PA 18104
Member Resurrected Life Community Church, Allentown, PA
Calibration Engineer, 21 years United States Air Force – Meteorologist
Local Church: Sound and Visual Technology Ministry Member
Cell Phone: 609-752-1774; Email Address: skylehl@gmail.com

Rev. Bruce Stevenson (2), 5992 Route 378, Center Valley, PA 18034
Pastor, Faith UCC, Center Valley
Serves on the Oversight Working Group
610-282-3939  Email: pastorbruce@faithchurchucc.org
Rev. Dale Sattizahn (1), 303 Oak Street, Roseto, PA 18013
Dale Sattizahn: Pastor Dale Sattizahn was ordained to Ministry in the United Church of Christ in September 1996. At that time, he was the pastor at Hetzel’s in the PSEC Conference. In 2001 he moved to Penn Central Conference and served the Nittany Valley Charge and in 2007 he moved to the PNEC when he became the settled pastor in Milford. He is currently serving at St Peter’s UCC in Tatamy. His Conference involvement includes: Moderator of the Schuylkill Association, Church and Ministry committee (Penn Central), Church Vitality (Penn Central), Lay Licensing committee, (PNEC) PNEC Board of Directors, attended General Synod (2015 &2017) and is currently the Convener of the Easton Mission Council and on the planning committee for the Men’s clergy Retreat. Other committee work includes President of the Pine Grove Ministerium, the Board of Directors for Schuylkill Woman in Crisis, belonged to the Swatara Water shed Association and has served on various Historical societies.

Pastor Kaye Lentz (1), 8048 PA Route 873, Slatonington, PA 18080
Authorized Minister serving at Salem UCC Moorestown, Bath since September 1, 2018.
PNEC: Committee on Ministry, Oversight Working Group. Previously served on Budget and Finance Committee.
Local Church: dual membership at Salem UCC Moorestown and St John’s UCC Laurys Station
Cell Phone: 610-217-0041; Email Address: salempastor2218@yahoo.com

Local Congregational Support Working Group
Mr. Albert Titus (1), 184 Wallace Way, Weatherly, PA 18255
Member, Salem UCC, Weatherly
570-427-4814  alberttitus@gmail.com

Mrs. Stephanie Creyer (1), 2642 27th Street SW, Allentown, PA 18103
Member of Chestnut Hill UCC, Coopersburg
PNEC: General Synod Delegate for 2021-2023
I work for PPL Corporation for over 30 years.
I am married to Reverend Christian Creyer and I have a daughter, Courtney.

Rev. Richard Teitsworth (2), 1070 Detweiler Avenue, Hellertown, PA 18055
I am an ordained, retired UCC minister who lives in Hellertown. I served churches as Pastor for forty two years. My last service was at First UCC here in Hellertown from 2005 – 2017. My wife Jackie along with son, Michael and I belong to Christ UCC in Bethlehem. We have three grown sons and three grandsons whom they all get to see often. He has remained active in the Penn Northeast Conference of the UCC, serving on its Local Congregational Support Working Group and serving as Co Chair.
Cell: 484-851-3605  Email: pastorrlteitswoth@gmail.com
Celebrating Their Anniversary

We congratulate the following PNEC Authorized Ministers who will celebrate a Special Anniversary of Ordination in 2021

60th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. David Knoebel (6/18/61) – Retired, living in Hometown, Tamaqua

50th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Harry Keppley (6/13/71) – Retired, living in Little Meadows
Rev. Allan Kramer Moyer (6/13/71) – Retired, living in Allentown
Rev. Ernest Diefenderfer (6/20/71) – Hospice Chaplain, living in Quakertown
Rev. Michael Dowd (10/1/71) – Pastor, First, Easton
Rev. Jeffrey Kistler (11/7/71) – Supply Pastor, Zion, Allentown

45th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. William Falla (6/27/76) – Professor, Moravian Seminary, living in Allentown

35th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Laurene Bowers (11/16/86) – Pastor, Christ, Bethlehem
Rev. Sally Zelker (6/14/86) – Pastor, Morgenland, Orefield
Rev. M. Jane Hess (9/20/86) – Pastor, Faith, Hazleton
Rev. David Quinn (9/25/86) – Pastor, St. John’s, Palmerton and Visitation Pastor, St. John’s, Fullerton, Whitehall

30th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. John Snyder Samuelson (7/28/91)

25th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Kris Snyder Samuelson (8/24/96) – Senior Pastor, Union, Neffs
Rev. Dale Sattizahn (9/18/96) – Pastor, St. Peter’s, Tatamy

20th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Heather Kurtz (11/24/01) – Pastor, Grace, Northampton

20th Anniversary of Licensing
Mr. Louis Aita (12/12/01) – Pastor, Emmanuel, Mountaintop

15th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Martin Nuscher (4/30/06) – Pastor, St. Paul’s, Indianland, Cherryville and St. John’s, Howertown, Northampton
Rev. Albert Martin (6/4/06) – Chaplain, Phoebe Ministries, Allentown
Rev. Emily Hall (6/10/06) – Chaplain and Pastor, Hope, Wind Gap

10th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Judy Brandon (3/20/11) – Pastor, UCC Greenawalds, Allentown
Rev. Will Hagenbuch (10/22/11) – Pastor, First Cong., Harford
Rev. Michael McGowan (6/12/11) – Pastor
Rev. Christian Creyer (7/31/11) – Pastor, Chestnut Hill, Coopersburg and Search & Call Associate for PNEC
5th Anniversary of Ordination
Rev. Rebekah Moyer (6/26/16) – Pastor, Emmanuel, Allentown and Lower Saucon, Hellertown

February 2021

Church Recognitions 2020

Churches Who Have Closed in 2020
Hope UCC, Allentown
St. James UCC, Shepton

Penn Northeast Conference Congregational Giving in 2020
OCWM Donations over $10,000
1. St. John’s UCC, Allentown
2. Trinity Great Swamp UCC, Spinnerstown
3. St. John’s UCC, Fullerton, Whitehall
4. Union UCC, Neffs
5. St. Paul’s UCC, Northampton
6. St. John’s UCC, Slatington

Top Ten per Capita OCWM Congregations
1. St. Peter’s UCC Shumans, Bloomsburg
2. St. John’s UCC, Allentown
3. Emmanuel UCC, Nuremberg
4. Trinity Great Swamp, Spinnerstown
5. Trinity UCC, Pleasant Valley
6. St. James UCC, Stillwater
7. Orangeville UCC, Orangeville
8. UCC Greenawalds, Allentown
10. St. John’s UCC Fullerton, Whitehall

5 for 5 Congregations
(Contributed to OCWM and the four special offerings: One Great Hour Sharing, Christmas Fund, Strengthen the Church, and Neighbors in Need)
1. Emmanuel UCC, Allentown
2. Jerusalem Western Salisbury, Allentown
3. Resurrected Life UCC, Allentown
4. St. John’s UCC, Allentown
5. Christ UCC, Bath
6. Salem’s Moorestown UCC, Bath
7. Trinity UCC, Bloomsburg
8. Faith UCC, Center Valley
9. St. Paul’s UCC Indianland, Cherryville
10. Lower Saucon UCC, Hellertown
11. St. John’s UCC, Laurys Station
12. Dille Parish UCC, LeRaysville
13. Trinity Stone Church UCC, Mt. Bethel
14. Grace UCC, Northampton
15. St. John’s UCC Howertown, Northampton
17. Trinity UCC, Pleasant Valley
18. Forks UCC, Stockertown
19. St. Paul’s UCC, Swiftwater
20. Salem UCC, Weatherly
21. St. John’s UCC Fullerton, Whitehall

Penn Northeast Conference Open and Affirming (ONA) Congregations (3.2021)
Faith UCC, Center Valley
St. John UCC, Riegelsville
New Creation UCC, Easton
St. John’s UCC, Allentown

Trinity Ref. UCC, Bloomsburg
St. John’s UCC Fullerton, Allentown
Whitehall

Zion Reformed UCC,
## Ministry Teams in PNEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Ministry Team</th>
<th>Convener(s)</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amigos de Guatemala</td>
<td>Karen Heim</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rksdheim@rcn.com">rksdheim@rcn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorization Working Group</td>
<td>Joel Risser*</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Pastor.joel@firstuccnellertown.com">Pastor.joel@firstuccnellertown.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mandy Muschett*</td>
<td><a href="mailto:achadeayne@gmail.com">achadeayne@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Co-Conveners)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Joanne Marchetto</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jomarchetto@rcn.com">jomarchetto@rcn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee on Ministry</td>
<td>Judy Brandon*</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Pastorjudy.ucc@gmail.com">Pastorjudy.ucc@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Meeting Planning</td>
<td>Joanne Marchetto</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jomarchetto@rcn.com">jomarchetto@rcn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Vitality</td>
<td>Matthew Gorkos</td>
<td><a href="mailto:revgorkos@gmail.com">revgorkos@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Response</td>
<td>Karl Jones</td>
<td><a href="mailto:KJones275@comcast.net">KJones275@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenical Relations</td>
<td>Amelie Sell</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pastorameliesell@gmail.com">pastorameliesell@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEM Fund</td>
<td>Barbara Hanks</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bjhkatz@aol.com">bjhkatz@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwilym T. Williams (GTW) Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>Janet Newett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:janetnewett@gmail.com">janetnewett@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Congregational Support Working Group</td>
<td>Rich Teitsworth*</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pastorrteitsworth@gmail.com">pastorrteitsworth@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>Teresa Martin Emily Hall</td>
<td><a href="mailto:revteresamartin@outlook.com">revteresamartin@outlook.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>(Co-Conveners)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hopeuccpastor@rcn.com">hopeuccpastor@rcn.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oversight Working Group</td>
<td>James Robison Bruce Stevenson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jamdarrob@gmail.com">jamdarrob@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Vice)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racial Justice</td>
<td>Bob Gutekunst</td>
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<tr>
<td>Search and Call</td>
<td>Doug Lander</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dlander@ptd.net">dlander@ptd.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Development</td>
<td>Kayli Freeman Janet Newett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pastorkayli@unionucc.org">pastorkayli@unionucc.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Co-Conveners)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:janetnewett@gmail.com">janetnewett@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEA Fund</td>
<td>Suzanne Brooks Cope</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sbcstmts@ptd.net">sbcstmts@ptd.net</a></td>
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*effective April 18, 2021*
Installation of Conference Officers, Board Members, Committee Members at the 2021 Spring Conference Meeting

Bonnie announces that all who were appointed or elected today and those currently serving on positions within the Penn Northeast to stand in their places.

Bonnie: Friends in the Risen Christ, you stand before God and this faith community in answer to your call to serve among us. Speak now your promises to us.

Elected Leaders: We accept the call of God to serve among you as leaders of the Penn Northeast Conference. We are prepared to exercise our ministry diligently and faithfully showing forth the love of the Risen Christ.

Bonnie: Members and Friends of the Penn Northeast Conference speak your covenant promises to our sisters and brothers before you.

Members of the Penn Northeast Conference: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, honor your leadership, and assist you that together we may be a faithful Conference of Jesus Christ.

Bonnie: Friends, you are now our covenanted leaders. Be merciful in all your ways, kind in heart, and humble in mind. Accept life, and be most patient and tolerant with one another. Forgive us freely as God has forgiven you. And, above everything else, be truly loving. Let the peace of the Risen Christ rule in your hearts, remembering that you are called to live in harmony and never forget to be thankful for what God has done for you. Let us pray these words:

All: Almighty God, who through baptism received these Your servants into the church, increase in them the gifts of Your Holy Spirit. Grant love for others, joy in service, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition, and self control in all things. We celebrate our covenanted leadership, the heroes of a history yet to be made. Amen and Amen.

Bonnie: Let us seek the grace, which moves to overwhelm us, trusting a Power greater than our own.

All: God sends us now into the future’s wake, loved – as we are – through challenge and mistake. We follow yet the path all saints have trod, sure of one thing:

*the Ever-Speaking God!*

April 2021
Advance Reports

Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates’ Annual Report
January 2020 – December 2020

Last calendar year, 2020, began as many do – with Epiphany celebrations. As we prepared to move into Lent 2020, everything began to change. By mid-March 2020 our nation was in lock-down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. That shutdown, in many significant ways, has remained in effect. The promise of vaccines and a “herd” immunity gave hope for 2021 and as I write this report some of our congregations, especially those with large sanctuaries and small worship attendance, are beginning to open their sanctuaries for in-person worship. Yet, I digress, as this is a report for 2020.

I want to share some key accomplishments of the last year with you as we look forward. Our Conference Board and Executive Committee have done exemplary work in creating 2020-2022 Conference Goals. These goals are supported by the work of our ministry teams, most of which have identified actions steps to be taken over the next years to help accomplish those goals. The Conference Goals are:

- Goal 1. Design and implement workshops which support lay leadership of congregations and strengthen their collaboration with their bi-vocational or part-time ministers.
- Goal 2. Develop and implement models/methods for collaboration and cooperation between congregations, ministers, the UCC, other denominations, and/or interfaith communities.
- Goal 3. Identify new/innovative sources of funding to support the ministries and financial health of the conference.
- Goal 4. Engage local congregations in identifying who they are, who their neighbor is, and who God is calling them to be in order to determine their congregation’s future (legacy) and/or to improve congregational vitality.
- Goal 5. Provide educational opportunities, support, covenantal relationships, and oversight to potential, currently serving and retired authorized ministers.

As you read the reports from the Ministry Teams, you will note some of the work has been completed. We have continued to offer as much continuing education as we are able for both congregations and pastors, highlighting much of the national offerings and those from seminaries and other partners. We have offered a variety of workshops on Saturdays to accommodate our lay volunteers and congregational leaders. Additionally, we offered a conference-wide book study on the book, “White Fragility” as a means of continuing our move toward stemming institutional racism.

We are working with even more effectiveness with our denominational partners: the Lehigh Valley Presbytery, the NE Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA, the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem, some of our Moravian and United Methodist partners. We held an event in Hazleton just before the pandemic delayed our work, with an aim toward working together to serve that community and the surrounding area. Our interfaith work continues through the Lehigh Conference of Churches and the Pennsylvania Council of Churches.

As a conference, we formed a Generosity Team and its first success was the kick-off of our Friends of the Conference program at the fall 2020 meeting. This Team is already on the way to raising its first annual goal of $30,000.
We have applied for a third year of our Council of Conference Ministers’ Innovation Grant as we continue to work on streamlining the search and call process for our smaller, part-time and rural churches.

Moving through the search process is only one of the times we encourage congregations to identify who they are and who God is calling them to be. Through our Congregational Vitality Team and the Local Congregational Support Working Group, we have shared the Mission Insite Tool, presented educational opportunities, offered assessments for congregations, and provided goal setting support. Our trained coaching team continues to be available to assist congregations in working through their values, outreach, vision, mission, vitality, and transition activities.

Our three working groups of the Committee on Ministry have worked tirelessly in the authorization, oversight, education, and support of our ministers. Our processes for plans of formation and ordination paper development have been revised and shared with our Members in Discernment. We have continued to educate authorized ministers about standing requirements, including continuing education, and provided triennial conversations and communities of practice to continue to support and prepare our authorized ministers for this 21st century church. We have reminded our authorized ministers and members in discernment with lay ministerial standing that the Longsdorf Fund is available to them to support their fulfillment of the continuing education requirements. Retired authorized ministers who wish to end their public ministerial roles have been offered Exempt Standing which exempts them from the continuing education requirement. Our Breeze system is working well, although some authorized ministers are struggling with the platform. Individualized support and training have been offered.

Pre-pandemic I traveled to Southern India with a team from PNEC and PSEC to sign covenant agreements with the Medak and Karnataka Central Dioceses of the Church of Southern India. As shared at last fall’s meeting, this was an amazing opportunity to learn, teach, preach and explore towns, villages, communities, cities, churches and seminaries with our colleagues. This was a life-altering experience for me.

The staff of our conference have worked admirably during this past year – and I have no doubt they will continue to do so. I can tell you that without their support, dedication, and commitment almost none of the work of the conference would occur.

Due to the end of the available funding, we discontinued the Associate Conference Minister for Outreach and New Church Starts position and said farewell to the Rev. Gilberto Garcia Rodriguez as a member of our staff. Gilberto continues to serve among us, for which I am truly grateful.

One of the challenges of the pandemic was the difficult decision to cancel last spring’s conference meeting, whose focus was to be on interfaith worship and relationships. Perhaps by 2022 we will be able to gather and offer that opportunity. Another of the challenges were the delays in celebrating my installation as your fourth Conference Minister. After delays in April and June, I was installed at our Fall Conference Meeting in November 2020. I have been and continue to be honored to serve among you. I am glad that we are partners in ministry together.

Blessings, Bonnie
Committee on Ministry Report

The C.O.M. is composed of thirty-nine members of the Conference (when there are no vacancies) who each serve on one of three Working Groups of the committee in addition to meeting as a committee of the whole three to four times a year (more or less often as needed). The three working groups are Authorization, Oversight and Local Congregational Support. The Committee on Ministry is a team that provides oversight of Authorized Ministers; nurtures those seeking authorization to be ministers of the United Church of Christ; and resources and supports local congregations and pastors. This team works to provide, equip and support leadership in congregations so that we may bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world on behalf of the whole United Church of Christ.

Presently Serving: Jeff Brinks, Cecilia Baxter, James Robison, Jeff Carlton, Steve Myers, Linda Garber, David Adams, Joyce Kohler, Sharon Hafman, Taryn Jory, Joel Risser, Dave Quinn, Dave DeRemer, Mandy Muschett, Todd Fennell, Bruce Stevenson, Andrea Lazicki, Nancy Kramer-Moyer, Barbara Hanks, Ruth Ann McCoy, Judy Brandon, Sandy Murphy, Richard Schantz, Mike McGowan, Theresa Martin, Rich Teitsworth, Bill Seaman, Brenda Hobson, Bob Gutekunst, Mark Rowell, Greg Edwards, Diane Schnaars, Kayli Freeman, Tom Moyer, Debra Hess, Kaye Lentz, and Conference Minister, Bonnie Bates.

We extend our sincere gratitude to those who have served and whose term is ending as of this meeting: Cecilia Baxter, Jeff Carlton, Bill Seaman and Jeff Brinks.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Rev. Kenneth Fuller who served until his passing on February 23, 2021.

The Committee on Ministry meets as a whole three to four times a year (more if needed) for the purpose of acting on the recommendations of the working groups or when a larger group is needed for decisions that affect the standing of an Authorized Minister or Congregation.

Since January of 2020, our Committee has approved the following individuals for ordination pending a valid call: Sean Drummond, Ashley Werkheiser, Rebecca Sausser, and Mark Rowell

At our January 11, 2021 meeting, we elected the Rev. Judy Brandon to serve as the next chair of the Committee on Ministry. Her term will begin at the conclusion of the Spring 2021 Conference meeting. We look forward to her leadership.

Our Committee also has the responsibility of planning Ministry Day, establishing a Compensation recommendation committee annually and attending to any reviews or extraordinary business that any of the Working Groups are not configured to cover.

Special thanks to the chairs and co-chairs of our working groups and to all who serve. Well Done! You are truly a blessing to our life together.

The Local Congregational Support Working Group – was chaired by Jeff Carlton and the Rev. Richard Teitsworth.

The Authorization Working Group – was chaired by the Rev. Cecilia Baxter and Mandy Muschett.

20.
The Oversight Working Group — was chaired by the Rev. James Robison and the Rev. Bruce Stevenson.

Even more special thanks to the Reverend Dr. Bonnie Bates whose wisdom, humor and enthusiasm continues to encourage us.

Respectfully submitted and thankful for all of you!

Jeff Brinks, Chairperson

Oversight Working Group Report

The Oversight Working Group oversees individuals serving in a ministerial capacity as Authorized Ministers in Penn Northeast Conference (PNEC) following the Manual on Ministry recommended by the Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization (MESA) Team of the United Church of Christ. One of the key responsibilities of this working group is to monitor adherence to the requirements to maintain standing as an Authorized Minister in the PNEC of the United Church of Christ. These requirements include 25 hours of continuing education ~ five (5) of which must be face-to-face contact hours, an annual Professional Portfolio Information Review, Boundary Training every three (3) years, Anti-Racism Training every three (3) years, Cultural Competence Training every three (3) years, and an annual Three- or Four-Way Covenant. In addition to the requirements, the Oversight Working Group maintains the transfers of standing, the granting of Exempt Standing and Leave of Absence, and conducting periodic situational support conversations with Authorized Ministers which also includes entrance and exit conversations. The Oversight Working Group also allocates monies for educational purposes from the Longsdorf Fund for Authorized Ministers. The Oversight Working Group also supports Authorized Ministers who are newly ordained or new to PNEC through Mentor/Collegial Partners and sponsoring a gathering for those new to PNEC as they begin their ministries among us and encourage all Authorized Ministers to participate in their local Area Mission Council and the PSEC/PNEC Clergy Convocation held each May. The Conference Minister and/or the Chairperson of the Oversight Working Group can receive concerns about the ministerial performance of Authorized Ministers.

Our accomplishments from April 2020 through March 2021 include:

Clergy Conversations:

Entrance Conversations

➢ Rebecca Stephens Retired 6/9/20
➢ Gary Barraco First Reformed, Berwick 9/8/20
➢ Matthew Gorkos Church of the Good Shepherd, Alburtis 11/10/20
➢ Dean Luther Zion, Ashland 12/8/20
➢ Barbara Dawkins Rowlett LeRaysville, Dille Parish 12/8/20
➢ Matthew Mardis LeCroy College Hill Presbyterian, Easton 3/9/21

Transition/Support Conversations

➢ Larry Pickens Ziegel’s, Breinigsville 2/9/21

Exit Conversations

➢ Kathy Brearley Longswamp, Mertztown 5/12/20
➢ Rod Wells Trinity, Mount Bethel 5/12/20
➢ Bob Stevens Zion, Allentown 9/8/20
➢ Alice Roth Jordan, Allentown 11/10/20
➢ Michael McGowan Ben Salem, Andreas 1/12/21
➢ Cecilia Baxter St. Luke’s, Belfast 2/9/21
Triannual Situational Support Conversations

- David Adams  Licensed to Grace, Catawissa  9/15/20
- Al Bastin  St. Paul’s, Tredlerstown  9/15/20
- Wayne Benack  Christ, Jim Thorpe  9/15/20
- David Berryman  Licensed to Zion, Stroudsburg  9/15/20
- Janet Boyd  Hiatus  9/15/20
- Lynn Breedy  Licensed  9/15/20
- Joan Brown  Grace, Mount Carmel  9/15/20
- Chris Cocca  Licensed to Christ, Low Hill  9/15/20
- Scott Cope  Phoebe  9/15/20
- Dave DeRemer  Hiatus  10/13/20
- Michael J. Dowd  First, Easton  9/15/20
- George Eckstein  St. Mark’s, Allentown  10/13/20
- Greg Edwards  Resurrected Life, Allentown  9/15/20
- Lori Esslinger  Old Zionsville  10/13/20
- Todd Fennell  Bethany, Bethlehem  9/15/20
- Dean Frey  Retired  10/13/20
- Wally Frisch  Ebenezer’s, New Tripoli  9/15/20
- Denise Fry  Trinity, Pleasant Valley  9/15/20
- Margie Good  Retired  9/15/20
- Ted Good  Retired  9/15/20
- Will Hagenbuch  First Cong., Harford  10/13/20
- Emily Hall  Hope, Wind Gap  9/15/20
- Eunice Hearn  Jacob’s, Weissport  10/13/20
- Jane Hess  Faith, Hazleton  9/15/20
- Mike Iski  St. Paul’s, Allentown  10/13/20
- Jeff Kistler  Retired  10/13/20
- Paul Knappenberger  St. John’s, Emmaus  9/15/20
- Randy Lentz  Licensed to PNEC  10/13/20
- Ed Livingston  Dryland, Nazareth  10/13/20
- Emily Livingston  St. John’s, Allentown  9/15/20
- Joanne Marchetto  Barn, Allentown  10/13/20
- Albert Martin  Phoebe  9/15/20
- Rebecca McMichael  Military Chaplain  10/13/20
- Martin Nuscher  St. Paul’s, Cherryville  9/15/20
- Dave Quinn  St. John’s, Palmerton  10/13/20
- Bob Rapp  Christ, Bethlehem  10/13/20
- Alice Roth  Retired  10/13/20
- Frank Schaffner  Solomon’s, Macungie  10/13/20
- Dave Schnaars  Interim, St. Paul’s Northampton  10/13/20
- Beth Sikorsky  Commissioned/St. Paul’s, Indianland  10/13/20
- David Charles Smith  Jordan, Allentown  9/15/20
- Sally Zelker  Morganland, Orefield  10/13/20

Mentors/Colllegial Partners:
- Allan Kramer-Moyer  Andrea Lazicki
- Teresa Martin  Matthew Gorkos
- James Robison  Barbara Dawkins Rowlett
- Judy Brandon  Matthew Mardis LeCroy

Change in Standing:
Transfer In:
Rebecca Stephens 6/9/20 from Ursinus Assoc./PSEC
Edward Livingston 9/8/20 from Philadelphia Assoc./PSEC

Transfer Out:
Frank Spada 9/17/20 to Western North Carolina Assoc./Southern Conf.
Maria Spada 9/17/20 to Western North Carolina Assoc./Southern Conf.
Michelle Funk 3/9/21 to Western North Carolina Assoc./Southern Conf.

Roster of Authorized Ministers with Standing:

Nancy Adams, ret. Richard Guhl, ret. Larry Pickens, ds
Jennifer Bannerman Robert Gutkeunst Don Quayle, ret.
Al Bastin William Hagenbuch David Quinn
Carol Bastin Emily Hall Catherine Regush
Bonnie Bates Nancy Hardy, ret. Joel Risser
Cecilia Baxter Sharon Harfman, ret. James Robison
Jameson Baxter Virginia Heimer Gilberto Rodriguez
Laurene Bowers Debra Hess Homer Royer, ret.
Janet Boyd Kenneth Hess Dale Sattizahn
Judy Brandon Jane Hess Rebecca Sausser
Katherine Brearley, ret. Steven Hummel Frank Schaffer
Jeff Brinks Heather Hunnicutt Dennis Schappell
Scott Brooks-Cope, ds Michael Iski Virginia Schlegel
Suzanne Brooks-Cope, ds Marian Johnson, ds Lee Schleicher, ret.
Donald Brown, ds Curtis Kemmerer William Seaman, ret.
Joan Brown, ds Jeffrey Kistler, ret. Lorraine Sell, ret.
Candi Cain-Borgman Paul Knappenberger Ernest Shaffer, ret.
Russell Campbell Allan Kramer-Moyer, ret. Lynn Shoaffer
Christian Creyer Heather Kurtz Carl Siegfried, ret.
David DeRemer Joseph Lacheik, ret. David Shomaker
Ernest Diefenderfer Edward Livingston Michael Smith
Henry Distler, ret. Emily Garcia Livingston Kris Snyder-Samuelsen
Michael Dowd Dean Luther Lloyd Steffen
Sean Drummond Joanne Marchetto Rebecca Stephens, ret.
Michael Eckroth Albert Martin Robert Stevens, ret.
George Eckstein, ret. Teresa Martin Bruce Stevenson
Gregory Edwards Michael McGowan Patience Stevenson
Susan Ellis Rebecca Jo McMichael Catherine Strouse, ret.
Lori Esslinger William Metzger, ret. Lisa Weida, ret.
Todd Fennel, ret. Lynne Mikulak Rodney Wells, ret.
Kathryn Foster Karen Moeschberger, ret. Mia White
Kayli Freeman Tom Morris, ret. Karen Yonney, ret.
Dean Frey, ret. Rebekah Moyer Sally Zelker
Denise Fry, ret. Christine Nelson, ret.
James Gottwald Martin Nuscher

Roster of Authorized Ministers as **Commissioned**:

Elizabeth Sikorsky

Roster of Members In-Discernment with Lay **Ministerial Standing**:

Gary Baracco Brian Haas Janet Newett Monte Schroeder
Sharon Frye Eunice Hearn, O of C Bob Rapp James Stanley
Kris Geer Michael Landsman Suzanne Schaeffer Ashley Werkheiser
Roster of Authorized Ministers as Licensed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>David Adam</th>
<th>Lynn Breedy</th>
<th>Brenda Hobson</th>
<th>Robert Mease</th>
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<tr>
<td>Louis Aita</td>
<td>Chris Cocca</td>
<td>Andrea Lazicki</td>
<td>Sandra Murphy</td>
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<td>David Berryman</td>
<td>Wally Frisch</td>
<td>Kaye Lentz</td>
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<td>Darlene Blocker</td>
<td>Margie Good</td>
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<td>Randy Lentz</td>
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Roster of Authorized Ministers with Exempt Standing:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bill Albright</th>
<th>9/11/18</th>
<th>Robert Lewis</th>
<th>11/13/18</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Bauer</td>
<td>1/8/19</td>
<td>Alan Miller</td>
<td>9/11/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Brown</td>
<td>9/11/18</td>
<td>David Mohr</td>
<td>4/14/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Burlington</td>
<td>9/30/19</td>
<td>Neil Mumma</td>
<td>2/12/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Dech</td>
<td>9/30/19</td>
<td>Ghulam Nasrani</td>
<td>9/11/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Dennison</td>
<td>10/13/20</td>
<td>LaVerne Passman</td>
<td>3/10/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barry Durie</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Helen Pearson</td>
<td>10/9/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Falla</td>
<td>7/9/19</td>
<td>Larry Pickar</td>
<td>10/9/18</td>
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<td>Frank Gassler</td>
<td>3/10/20</td>
<td>Richard Reidy</td>
<td>2/12/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamar Handwerk</td>
<td>2/12/19</td>
<td>Alice Roth</td>
<td>11/1/20</td>
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<td>Allen Heckman</td>
<td>9/11/18</td>
<td>Donald Snyder</td>
<td>4/13/21</td>
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<td>Russell Heintzelman</td>
<td>10/9/18</td>
<td>John Snyder-Samuelson</td>
<td>5/23/18</td>
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<td>Tom Hershberger</td>
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<td>Richard Solliday</td>
<td>3/10/20</td>
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<td>Lunnett Hilliard</td>
<td>3/10/20</td>
<td>Peter Unger</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
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<td>John Hoff</td>
<td>9/11/18</td>
<td>Stacy Weaver</td>
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<td>Jack Ivey</td>
<td>9/11/18</td>
<td>John Weiler</td>
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<td>Kathleen Jones</td>
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<td>Wendy Williams</td>
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<td>Harry Keppley</td>
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<td>David Knoebel</td>
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Roster of Authorized Ministers with Leave of Absence:

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<tr>
<th>Rebecca Broyan</th>
<th>6/15/16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve Shanaman</td>
<td>3/22/17</td>
<td>renewed until 3/22/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emmajane Finney</td>
<td>3/10/20</td>
<td>renewed until 3/9/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew Seeds</td>
<td>5/12/20</td>
<td>until 5/12/21</td>
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Roster of Authorized Ministers with Out-of-Compliance:

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<tr>
<th>Benack, Wayne</th>
<th>2/9/21</th>
<th>Knappenberger, Joshua</th>
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<tr>
<td>Binde, John</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Lennon Linda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bogert, Elaine</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Schnaars, Dave</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellsworth, Bill</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Smith, Gerald</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
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<td>Gilbert, Emily Jean</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Stowell, John</td>
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<td>Hearn, Eunice</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Wadsworth, Judy</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
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<td>Kemmerer, Curt</td>
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The specifics of the Longsdorf Fund can be found in the Financial Report listing numerous educational grants following the guidelines of the Longsdorf Fund.

Thank you to those who serve on the Oversight Working Group of the Committee on Ministry:

Class of 2021

Rev. Jeff Brinks
Mrs. Nancy Kramer-Moyer
Chaplain Andrea Lazicki
Pastor Kaye Lentz
Rev. Bruce Stevenson

Class of 2022

Rev. Judy Brandon
Ms. Barbara Hanks
Mrs. Ruth Ann McCay
Mr. Tom Moyer
Rev. James Robison

Class of 2023

Rev. Teresa Martin
Rev. Michael McGowan
Pastor Sandy Murphy
Rev. Larry Pickens
Mr. Richard Schantz
The following resigned during the past year from the working group: Jim Stanley, Jameson Baxter, and Joshua Knappenberger.

And a special thank you to the following who recently went through training to serve on the PNEC Fitness Review Response Team: Trudi Ëgan, Barbara Hanks, Nancy Kramer-Moyer, Joyce Kohler, Ruth Ann McCay, Mandy Muschett, Jeff Carlton, Richard Schantz, Candi Cain-Borgman, Judy Brandon, Kayli Freeman, Sharon Harman, Heather Kurtz, Kaye Lentz, Teresa Martin, Mark Rowell, Jeff Brinks, David DeRemer, Gregory Edwards, and Joel Risser.

Respectfully submitted,
James Robison, Chairperson
Bruce Stevenson, Vice Chairperson

Authorization Working Group Report
In memory of the Rev. Ken Fuller

In the 10 meetings we have held since our last report, the Authorization Working Group met with 12 candidates for ministry.

Accepted as MID
Patti Hoyt

Approved for Ecclesiastical Council
Michael Landsman
Laura Oesterle

Approved for Dual Standing
Emily Hall

Got updates from
Gary Barraco Alex Rodriguez
Carter Baxter Tammy Miles
Bob Rapp Brian Haas
Wally Frisch

Removed as MID
James Stanley (at his request)

All candidates in various stages in their journey towards ordination:
Lou Aita Patricia Hoyt
Gary Barraco Michael Landsman
Carter Baxter Jane Matsinger
Carrie Beleno Tammy Miles
Darlene Blocker Janet Newett
Wally Frisch Bob Rapp
Sharon Frye Alex Rodriguez
Kris Geer Mark Rowell
Brian Haas Suzanne Schaeffer
Eunice Hearn Monte Schroeder

Ashley Werkheiser
Lily Winzer
Barbara Rowlett
(Dual Standing)
Michael Schadt
(Privilege of Call)

In other business we
- revised the plan of formation for MID’s, as well as the ordination paper guidelines.
- We elected new co-chairs: Mandy Muschett and Joel Risser, and thanked Cecilia Baxter for her leadership.

25.
Members of the Authorization Working Group
Bonnie Bates, Cecilia Baxter (chair), Karen Ezzo, Linda Garber, Nancy Hardy, Sharon Harfman, Taryn Jory, Joyce Kohler, Amanda Muschett, Steve Myers, Joel Risser
New members: David Quinn, Rod Wells, Deb Hess, David DeRemer, Dave Adams.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Solt Harfman, secretary

Local Congregational Support Working Group Report

Members of the group (in reverse alphabetical order!)
Rich Teitsworth, Diane Schnaars, Bill Seaman, Mark Rowell, Brenda Hobson, Bob Gutekunst, Greg Edwards, Jeff Carlton

What did we do in 2020?
- Developed SMART action plans for the 2 Conference Goals listed below:

  Goal 1: Design and implement workshops which support lay leadership of congregations and strengthen their collaboration with their bi-vocational or part time ministers.
    - Provide resources and methods for sharing on technology in worship, youth & faith formation, pastoral care throughout 2020-2021.
    - Provide vignettes focusing on racism as resources and conversation guides for congregations in 2020. Note that after several attempts, we recognized that others would be better suited to move forward with this item. Bonnie will refer this to the Racial Justice Ministry Team.

  Goal 4: Engage local congregations in identifying who they are, who their neighbor is, and who God is calling them to be in order to determine their congregation’s future (legacy) and/or to improve congregational vitality.
    - Resource congregations to help them move into an external missional focus throughout 2020-2022.
    - Support congregations in their movement toward mergers, shared ministry or legacy throughout 2020-2022.

- The Local Congregational Support Working Group and the Congregational Vitality Team began holding joint meetings, as we realized that we could support each other’s efforts.

- Brenda Hobson, Bob Gutekunst and Bill Seaman prepared a document on Pastoral Care that will be shared throughout the conference in various manners (This Week in Penn NE, email, Facebook and breakout sessions at trainings)

- Working with Christian Creyer, we distributed a survey designed to identify and prioritize the training we provide to local congregations was distributed in November

- We were involved with one situational support activity in 2020.

What are we planning for 2021?
- Our team will offer Congregational Leadership Training on March 20.
Based on the November survey results, the Local Congregational Support Working Group and the Congregational Vitality Team are going to develop training in the following areas:

a. Cultural competence – Dimensions of isms recording for definitions, breakouts for WISE, LGBTQ, ageism, able-ism
b. Using Social Media for Connections
c. Virtual Worship techniques
d. Family Systems (Bruce Stevenson has agreed to do this) – date to be set
e. Using Zoom Bonnie will ask Sue Yoder about offering this
f. Bible Study Webinars David Charles Smith, Bob Guttekunst and Matt Gorkos will prepare a “How-to” and then we will share an invitation for open bible studies for which others are welcome

In addition, two members of the Group are interested in working on a workshop which addresses the challenges of supporting individuals with special needs.

This report is respectively submitted on behalf of the team by Rich Teitsworth & Jeff Carlton

**GEM Fund Ministry Team Report**

*(Grants Energizing Mission)*

The GEM (Grants Energizing Mission) Fund Ministry Team schedules quarterly meetings to consider grant requests from PNEC churches for projects to enhance the mission of that congregation. Since the last report, the Team met December 17, 2020, and February 3, 2021. Grants were awarded to the following:

- Dille Parish UCC, Le Raysville - $800 for The Noon-Time Social Injustice Lecture Series (4 lectures) - awarded 2-3-2021

The Team also approved the change requested by Trinity UCC, Mt. Bethel, to use the $1,000 grant received to pursue establishing a VIRTUAL Memory Café. Due to COVID-19 restrictions it is not possible to plan for in-person activities at this time.

We received a progress report from GEM grant recipient, Old Zionsville UCC, that a Social Media Coordinator has been hired for a year. Grant awarded: $3,000 May 2020.

Also, New Creation UCC, Easton, reports that they have completed their project to enhance technology services to further their outreach ministries. Grant awarded: $2,000 May 2020.

Thanks to Team members: Rev. Dale Sattizahn, Ms. Linda Lenhart, Pastor Sandy Murphy, Rev. Catherine Strouse, Rev. Edward Livingston, and support staff: Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates and Ms. Barbara Jennings.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara J. Hanks, GEM Team Leader
Staff & Personnel Committee Report

In 2020 the Staff and Personnel Committee:
- Provided support and review for Bonnie’s leadership of the conference staff
- At the request of the board of directors, contracted for and carried out a “360 Review” of Bonnie’s Ministry among us
- Shared the results of this review with Bonnie and with the PNEC Board in September

My thanks to the members who serve on the Staff and Personnel Committee: Patti Hoyt, Dave Berryman, Becky Moyer, Ed Taylor, Bob Quinby, Sharon Frye, Frank Schaffer, and Barbara Davies. My time on the Committee will come to a close since I have served two terms part of which I served as the Chair.

Scott Brooks Cope, Chair

Youth & Adult Empowerment Fund Ministry Team (YEA)

The YEA Committee did not meet in 2020. Due to Covid, no applications for scholarships from youth or adult were received.

Suzanne Brooks-Cope, Chair

Coaching Report

January – Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates was able to train coaches over a two-day period. The coaches were able to create goals in the next few years. Some of those goals included:
- This Week articles and Facebook Announcements
- Resources from Center for Parish Development to train congregations.
- Work on collaboration with other ecumenical partners to assist in the development of supports for congregations and ministers.
- “leadership development and support; empowering leaders – small group or individual coaching.”
- Coaching around Mission Insite, demographics and community context and relationships throughout 2020-2021.
- To work on Legacy Coaching.
- To assist congregations in re-imaging how they will move forward as church in the fall/winter of 2020-2021.

The coaches will continue to strive to meet these goals.

Churches can request a Coach in areas such as: Strategic Planning, Visioning, Mission Insite, Transition, Search Committee, Governance, Church Revitalization, Resisting Change, Confirmation, Conflict and Church Legacy.

I would like to thank Barbara Jennings for all her help as the support person for our team. I greatly appreciate all her help and time.

I would also like to thank Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates for her continued guidance and resources for Coaching.
Thank you to the coaches who continue to make a difference in our Conference through their skills and time. Thank you for volunteering and making a commitment to help the local churches.

Respectfully Submitted, Heather Kurtz, Coach Coordinator

Generosity Team Report

Members: Rebecca Sausser, Martin Nuscher, Kathryn Foster, Helena Lindquist, Doug Lander, Bonnie Bates

Formation in 2020: During the Covid19 Global Pandemic members of the Governing Board felt lead to create a Committee focused on fostering generosity within the Penn Northeast Conference. Thus the Generosity Committee formed to focus on the ministry of generosity and the mindset of abundance found in our Lord Jesus Christ!

Accomplishments:
- Formed the Generosity Committee and began holding regular meetings.
- At the Fall Conference meeting in 2020 we introduced our ‘Friends of the Conference’ Giving Campaign. This campaign shows that even small acts of generosity can make a huge impact!
  - Anyone can go to the Friends of the Conference tab on the conference website for letters, graphics, bulletin inserts, and more information to share with your congregations.
- In the 3 months of 2020 that followed our initial introduction of Friends of the Conference at the fall meeting we received over $4,900.

‘Friends of the Conference’ Giving Campaign
- By making a donation to Friends of the Conference, you are contributing to the many works and programs run and executed by the Penn Northeast Conference. Benefits like ‘This Week in PNEC,’ free continuing education opportunities, the conference staff, and more.
- If every individual member of our conference gave $1, we would have an additional $30,000! That is why our goal for 2021 is $30,000, because even a single dollar can make a huge difference!
- Donors that give $25, $50, and $100 will receive a thank you letter and a gift of appreciation. See the ‘Friends of the Conference’ information tab on the conferences website.

Additionally, the members of this Committee have attended workshops and trainings specifically addressing generosity, long-term strategic fundraising, and how to educate pastors and congregations about money in general. We hope to role out some continuing education opportunities in 2021 that address these topics and more.

The Generosity of the Penn Northeast Conference has been a blessing! We received more donations in 2020 than we had expected and we thank each person who had contributed! We hope to continue to be surprised and delighted by the movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst! Blessings to you!

-Rev. Rebecca Sausser- Committee Chair

Disaster Ministry Report

One year ago, we started seeing the first COVID-19 cases in Pennsylvania. It has been a challenging year for all of us – one that has tested us in many ways. We have lost too many family and friends to the virus.
We have not been able to gather for worship, for fellowship, or even to do mission or rebuild trips. As we reported last summer this pandemic has brought changes to how we do disaster ministry.

As if COVID-19 was not enough, our Conference was hit by Tropical Storm Isaiaes in August 2020 and several smaller events. Through our Disaster Ministry Team, you have brought hope and recovery to people who have suffered from the pandemic and other “storms”:

- In response to TS Isaiaes the Conference secured a $5,000 recovery grant from the national setting of the UCC. The Conference has served as the financial sponsor of the recovery work in the Lehigh Valley. This grant, and other funding from our partners, has enabled a private bridge to be built, heat and hot water to be restored to homes, clean-up and rebuild work completed in others, and, in general, hope given to some hurting families.
- The work continues throughout eastern PA in response to TS Isaiaes. Homes have been restored in Lehigh, Monroe, and Luzerne counties. The national setting of the UCC is considering our request for a Volunteer in Service who would work for the next 6 months as the Volunteer Coordinate so we can accomplish more.
- 2020 did not see many mission trips. However, opportunities are beginning to open, so watch the Conference communications for news.
- Our tool trailers reside in Greenawalds and stand ready to be deplored.
- We have been active on the NEPA VOAD, Susquehanna, Bradford, and Columbia county COAD calls, coordinating with food banks, volunteer centers, and other agencies to collaborate with those who are providing needed services.
- We have worked with county leaders from Susquehanna, Lehigh, and Northampton counties to help staff testing and vaccination sites.

Last summer we reported that we are participating with the other ministry teams in the Conference 2020-2022 goals setting process. Here is a listing of our objectives for 2020 and our progress:

- The Disaster Ministry Team will share effective models and opportunities of collaboration and cooperation with the Conference monthly through “This Week in PNEC!” and conduct 3 workshops to educate our churches and leaders on effective, viable opportunities in 2021.

We thank the Conference staff for their cooperation on getting our items into “This Week in PNEC.” We are planning a webinar later this spring on how disaster ministry can help a church increase its ministry and mission. Watch for details.

- When the Disaster Ministry Team submits a proposal for a ministry opportunity which is not within the Conference budget it will contain the source and extent of funding for the project.

As noted above, we have used a grant from the national setting in conjunction with funding from other sources to do rebuild work.

- With the help of the Conference Staff, the Disaster Ministry Team will identify and work with 2 congregations in 2021 who seek to revitalize their ministry and their community following a natural or human-caused disaster, using a unified process that engages the congregation in vibrant worship and Bible study; intentionally listens to both the members of the church and the surrounding community; compiles data, and prayerfully identifies its future.

If your church would like to be one of these churches wanting to revitalize your ministry, please reach out to Karl Jones.

- The Disaster Ministry Team will present 4 programs in 2021 that educates ministers on the many and varied ways a pastor can serve the wider church and community through the programs of disaster and volunteer ministries.

We will work with Conference staff and other ministry leaders to discover opportunities.
In 2021, the Disaster Ministry Team and Conference leadership will recruit, train, and authorize a PNEC Disaster Coordinator. COVID has kept the Conference Disaster Coordinator grounded in his home office. Therefore, it is difficult for him to get to know people throughout the Conference who might be passionate about becoming a part of this team and/or the CDC. All help that can be offered by others would be appreciated.

Other work continues:
- The UCC and CWS have resumed accepting clean-up buckets and hygiene kits. Thanks to Pastor Martin Nuscher we were able to get a large shipment to the Maryland warehouse in late January. There is a list of our Conference’s collection sites on the Conference web site, as well as information on building the kits and applying for a grant from the national setting.
- To the best of my knowledge the rebuild work from the flooding of 2018 has been completed, except for a possible bridge rebuild in Bradford County.
- We continue to get vital information into our churches for preparedness. If you would like to work on your church’s preparedness or COOP plans, contact Karl Jones.

At the state-wide level Karl continues to serve as the Secretary and Operation Lead for the PA Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (PAVOAD). Much of the work in 2021 continues to be COVID-19 and Isaias related.

We are participating with the national setting of the UCC:
- The Conference Disaster Coordinators meet month to coordinate and share resources. This group is led by our new UCC Disaster Minister, Lesli Remaly.
- The coordinating ministry setting in the national church is now called Global H.O.P.E. The new Team Leader of this ministry is Joshua Baird.
- You can learn more about it what is going on through the UCC Disaster network at https://uccfiles.com/pdf/2020-DM-Highlights-Final.pdf.
- As a representative of the UCC Karl serves as the vice-chair of the National VOAD Community Preparedness Committee. His term ends in May 2021, but he is being nominated by the national setting to remain on this committee.

Thank you for your prayers and support in this unique and challenging time. If you would like to become involved in this vibrant ministry or have your congregation take advantage of any of the programs mentioned above, contact Karl.

Submitted by,
Karl Jones
Kjones275@comcast.net; 570-617-4018
Team Members Karl Jones, Grant Field, Dawn Hummel, Mark Rowell, Robert Thetga, Martin Nuscher

Ecumenical Relations Mission Team Report

“All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name.” Psalm 86:9 NIV

The Ecumenical Relations Mission Team (ERMT) is delighted to share in the joyful labors of both the Penn Northeast (PNEC) and Pennsylvania Southeast Conferences (PSEC). We benefit from the active
support and participation of both Conferences. At the same time, we recognize the work in which we are involved is on behalf of those who believe in and share the ministry of the congregations of both Conferences.

Our work revolves around maintaining and expanding upon the connections between people from our conference churches with Christian persons around the world. This involves strengthening relations with members of churches in nations and regions with historic connections to the United Church of Christ and our predecessor bodies. In recent years, we also have made new partnerships with churches that have cultural and theological ties to UCC churches within our Conference boundaries. We are working to embody the motto of the United Church of Christ “That they all may be one” (John 17:21) by strengthening our connection to Christians in other countries and other denominations. We invite all of the members of our Conferences to pray for our partner churches and their members. We also invite all of the members of the PNEC and PSEC to consider ways you would like to personally support and become part of the ERMT’s work and mission.

In the past, members of our team have had the opportunity to travel to the places our partner churches are located. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has put a hold on travel. Over the past year, we have spent time learning from and with our partners through ZOOM meetings, emails and phone calls.

We have Kirchengemeinschaft (a special church fellowship) with German partners, specifically the Anhalt District Church of the Union of Evangelical Churches (UEK) of Germany. This region is in part of the area that was formerly East Germany. We participate in the larger UCC (USA) and UEK (Germany).

We have a partnership with the Fraternity of Baptist Churches in Cuba.

We support the work of the Amigos de Guatemala. There is a report from the work of the Amigos elsewhere in these documents.

We work to support the Shared Ministry Congregations between the Eastern Pennsylvania UCC and Lutheran congregations. This group meets and encourages the work of Shared Ministry Churches and Pastors.

We have a formal partnership between the Church of South India, Medak Diocese.

We have a Japan Mission Partnership with UCC Missionaries Jeffrey Mensendieck cooperating with the PNEC and Martha Mensendieck with the PSEC. Every year, members of our churches participate in a yearly Christmas Card Exchange with UCC Churches in Japan.

Our Team meets quarterly and works to facilitate the work of constituent working groups which engage their work between Team meetings. Our meetings over the past year have been held over ZOOM, and this will continue to be our meeting method until we are no longer concerned about the pandemic. For more information on the work of the various subcommittee please contact the chair, or members of the Team as listed at the end of this report.

In 2021, we hope to strengthen our connections with our partner churches in Germany, India, Guatemala, Japan, and Cuba, as well and our Lutheran Ecumenical partners.

We are indebted to Rev. Homer Royer who fearlessly led our team as our chair for three years. We pray for his ministry work, for him, and for his family.
Our committee members are Bonnie Bates, Bill Worley, Darryl Cruz, Judith Fryer, Jerel Gade, Karen Heim, Roger Heim, Martha Kriebel, Charles Kuthuru, Russ Mittman, Frank Schaffer, David Charles Smith, Chandra Soans, Linda Lenhart, Ashley Snyder, Amelie Sell, Chair.

Faith Formation Ministry Team Report

For approximately 1.5-2 years members of the Faith Formation Ministry Team have been talking about the overlap that occurs between this Ministry team and the Youth/Young Adult Ministry Team. In the beginning of February 2021, productive conversation occurred between these two teams, in consultation with PNEC Conference Minister Bonnie Bates.

We have decided to dissolve the Faith Formation Ministry Team in favor of combining with the Youth/Young Adult Ministry Team to form a new team called the Spiritual Development Ministry Team!

We are really excited about this new team! The purpose is twofold:

1. Network and resource leaders from our local congregations who strive to equip, connect and transform the spiritual lives of children, youth and young adults. We support leaders whether they are paid staff or a volunteer, authorized minister or lay leader.
2. Provide opportunities for youth and young adults outside of their local church for their continued spiritual/personal development and understanding of Christian discipleship and mission.

We commit to:

- Promote life-long spiritual development
- Model and teach others to live out the Gospel in their daily walk
- Energize and support the development of relationships both within local churches but also with the Conference and National Church

We promise to:

- Be open and accepting of the questions, doubts and wonders of others.
- Be welcoming and affirming of all God’s children.
- To incorporate these Christ-like values into all of our interactions with our local congregations.

Spiritual Development Ministry Team Goals:

1. Plan, promote and implement at least ONE Leader training event per calendar year.
2. Plan, promote and implement at least ONE Young adult event per calendar year.
3. Provide networking opportunities for those in our local churches engaged in Faith Formation and Youth Ministries.
4. Support one conference-wide mission or service activity per calendar year, acting in partnership with community partners and local organizations.
5. Provide information and encourage connections with the wider church, including the Middle-Atlantic Association of United Church Educators (MA AUCE).
6. Oversee (or delegate) the planning of PNEC Youth/Young Adult events including, but not limited to, Annual Youth Retreat, Sleep-out for Homelessness, PNEC Mission Trips, Regional Youth Event & National Youth Event.
7. Effective marketing of any planned activity by means of (including, but not limited to) This Week in PNEC, Social Media, Direct Mail, and Email to local congregations.

33.
Describe how people can become engaged in this work of this Ministry Team
Know you are not alone; participate in our activities for support, resource sharing, and fellowship.
Engage in social media with us through the Facebook Group entitled: “PNEC Educators.”
If you would like to participate in our Team Meetings to plan with us, we are happy to have your voice!

Respectfully submitted,
Your co-conveners:
Janet Newett at janetnewett@gmail.com & Kayli Freeman at pastorkayli@unionucc.org, 610-390-8768,
with Ministry Team Members: Bob Gutekunst, Staci Gower, Marji Hughes and Richard Mollica

Youth & Young Adult Report

For the past few years there has been extensive conversation about overlap of the Faith Formation
Ministry Team and the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team... that conversation has finally culminated
in the development of a NEW ministry team... SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY TEAM!

Below is a gander at some of what the Spiritual Development Ministry Team does/is about...

1. Network and resource leaders from our local congregations who strive to equip, connect and
   transform the spiritual lives of children, youth and young adults. We support leaders whether they
   are paid staff or a volunteer, authorized minister or lay leader.

2. Provide opportunities for youth and young adults outside of their local church for their continued
   spiritual/personal development and understanding of Christian discipleship and mission.

Beyond just this purpose, we hope to:
   • Promote life-long spiritual development
   • Model and teach others to live out the Gospel in their daily walk
   • Energize and support the development of relationships both within local churches but also with
     the Conference and National Church

We:
   • Promise to be open and accepting of the questions, doubts and wonders of others.
   • Promise to be welcoming and affirming of all God’s children.
   • Promise to incorporate these Christ-like values into all of our interactions with our local
     congregations.

The goals that we have set forth to best serve the members of our PNEC community are:

1. Plan, promote and implement at least ONE Leader training event per calendar year.
2. Plan, promote and implement at least ONE Young adult event per calendar year.
3. Provide networking opportunities for those in our local churches engaged in Faith Formation and
   Youth Ministries.
4. Support one conference-wide mission or service activity per calendar year, acting in partnership
   with community partners and local organizations.
5. Provide information and encourage connections with the wider church, including the Middle-
   Atlantic Association of United Church Educators (MA AUCE).
6. Oversee (or delegate) the planning of PNEC Youth/Young Adult events including, but not limited to, Annual Youth Retreat, Sleep-out for Homelessness, PNEC Mission Trips, Regional Youth Event & National Youth Event.

7. Effective marketing of any planned activity by means of (including, but not limited to) This Week in PNEC, Social Media, Direct Mail, and Email to local congregations.

Know you are not alone: participate in our activities for support, resource sharing, and fellowship. Engage in social media with us through the Facebook Group entitled: “PNEC Educators.”

If you would like to participate in our Team Meetings to plan with us, we are happy to have your voice!

Respectfully submitted,
Kayli Freeman (pastorkayli@unionucc.org) & Janet Newett (janetnewett@gmail.com) alongside the SDMT members, Marjorie Baltz, Staci Gower, Bob Gutekunst, Marji Hughes, Rich Mollica, Tracy Whitehead, Ned Whitehead

Gwilym T. Williams (GTW) Scholarship Fund Ministry Team Report

The GTW Scholarship Fund was designed to help individuals from our UCC churches fund their educational goal when those goals are related to fields of service such as: medical doctor, a BS in nursing, occupational, physical or speech therapy, clinical counseling, ordained minister, certified teacher/educator, or other clinical degrees as such. Please feel empowered to share this information with your congregation. (For a flyer to hang in your church, use the email address found below.)

The GTW Scholarship Fund Ministry Team convened twice in 2020, which is customary since we have application deadlines of March 1 and October 1. Both meetings occurred via Zoom. (By the time you are reading this report, we will have also completed our spring 2021 evaluations, as well.)

How does a ZOOM mtg work when you are reviewing an application? A “preview team” of two individual meets in person at the conference office to check the applications for completeness. Applicants are contacted if something is missing and giving approximately 3 -4 weeks to comply. All the applications are emailed to the Team Chairperson (thank you Barbara!) and moved into a shared Google Drive to be reviewed by the team before we have our virtual meeting.

In April 2020, each applicant was granted $2000 to assist them with their educational needs, except one applicant who was granted their full request of $1500. In November 2020, each applicant was granted $1600.

The GTW Team gives a special thank you to team member Marilyn. She serves as our secretary and also always volunteers to do the extra work to help preview the applications. We appreciate you, Marilyn!

Respectfully submitted, Janet Newett, on behalf of the GTW Ministry Team:
Lori Balliet, Barbara Davies, Bonnie Falla, Jillian Hensinger, Keith Lenhart, and Marilyn Steckel.
janetnewett@gmail.com for questions
PNEC Amigos de Guatemala Report
Report on Activities in the year of our Lord 2021

The Covid-19 virus has delayed any work on the facility in Monte Margarita. We do know that the construction is in its last phase of putting in the generator, water filtration system and furniture. We wish the facility had been completed so doctors and nurses could have used it to tend to our friends in Monte Margarita. So many have or have had Covid. With the remote location of the facility, people there have little hope of obtaining any vaccine in the near future.

As a team, we are taking this time to educate ourselves about history, culture and politics of Guatemala. We are reading articles from a book entitled The Guatemalan Reader. We read 2 articles each month, then meet by zoom to discuss them.

We look forward to the time when we can plan a medical trip to Guatemala to continue the work we began in 2010.

Respectfully submitted,
Roger & Karen Heim, co-chairs

Pennsylvania Council of Churches Annual Report

Advocacy and Ecumenical Activities of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches

The COVID-19 pandemic curtailed some of the advocacy-related activities planned for 2020 which included a statewide tour of Pennsylvania with a solitary confinement cell replica and related programs. Our goal was to provide education about solitary confinement and prisoner advocacy training. We did manage to hold one early “Solidarity Not Solitary” program in early January, and we also held meetings about solitary confinement with key elected officials to advocate for legislation to substantially reduce its use.

Furthermore, in lieu of the planned solitary programming our Episcopal Service Corps fellow, Emily Schmid, planned and carried out online book studies on the books White Fragility and Just Mercy. She also proposed and helped to facilitate a Lenten devotional guide, 40 Days of Solidarity to address solitary confinement and other criminal justice reform issues.

We co-sponsored and helped to facilitate a program with the CeaseFirePA Leadership Institute to introduce participants to gun violence reduction legislation and advocacy.

We planned, sponsored, or participated in online prayer events. Prayer gatherings included prayers for: incarcerated persons during the pandemic; legislation to reduce gun violence; valuing Black and Brown lives/peace in our communities; prayers for a peaceful election; prayers for a peaceful transfer of power; and prayers for all people dealing with the pandemic over the holidays. Working with Episcopal Service Corps fellow, Kelsey Reyes, we planned and carried out two discussion events on the 2020 election and COVID-19. We continued vigils in support of immigrant families detained at the Berks County Residential Center and held the 12th annual Commonwealth Interfaith Service: Prayers for Justice and Peace remotely for the first time (view at https://www.facebook.com/PACouncilsAdvocacy/live). In an event co-sponsored by the Council, Pennsylvania’s Senior Senator Bob Casey joined clergy and faith leaders from across the Commonwealth on August 28 to answer questions reflecting several
concerns within the state’s faith community around the coronavirus pandemic. Topics covered included: efforts to get unemployed persons back to work; disproportionate impact of the virus on persons of color; ensuring adequate nutrition for children when schools are closed; protections against evictions and foreclosures; protecting mail-in voting, considering cutbacks in the US Postal Service, and what will happen as recipients of Paycheck Protection Program loans look to converting them to grants, as envisioned at the creation of the program. Also covered were disparities in Pennsylvania’s public-school funding and what Senator Casey planned to do to make the system more equitable. In a particularly encouraging note—one that spoke directly to dealing with getting people back to work—the Senator announced that he would be introducing a bill to create a new version of the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

On October 7, 2020, the Council hosted “An Evening with Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis,” co-chair of the national Poor People’s Campaign. She spoke of the Campaign’s work to turn out poor and low-income voters and answered questions from the viewers. The Campaign’s groundbreaking report, “Unleashing the Power of Poor and Low-Income Americans,” noted that just a few percentage points change in the turnout of poor and low-income people could change the political maps of this country. The event on the Council’s YouTube channel at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCunqnfI0eRLh_o715zhiTIA. The Council has spoken out in 2020 through a series of statements that were widely shared (including in the media) and posted on the Council’s website. Statements included: A Pastoral Statement at a Time of Global Pandemic (3/27/20); A Pastoral Call to Dismantle Racism and End Violence Against People of Color (6/2/20); Pennsylvania Council of Churches’ Statement on 6/18/20 Supreme Court DACA Decision (6/18/20); and A Statement Calling for a Peaceful 2020 Election (10/28/20). All are available at https://www.pachurches.org/about-us/statements/.

The Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach completed a sabbatical where she visited or held Zoom meetings with counterpart state councils across the country. During those meetings she gleaned several ideas that have worked for others and looks forward to working with a newly formed Commission on Unity and Relationships to determine what our own council will do moving forward. More will be shared on the sabbatical within this report.

In this consequential year, the program also provided resources aimed at helping church bodies, congregations, and people of faith (and others) with important issues facing the state and country, building resource pages around COVID-19, the 2020 Census, and the election. Looking forward, the Commission on Public Witness is still working on refining advocacy priorities for 2021-22. We will place the strongest emphasis on addressing racism, white supremacy, and Christian nationalism and on educating people of faith about government systems and our call to be faithful advocates. Priority advocacy efforts will focus on addressing racism and the related issues named above that form the core of problematic legislation and policies. We will be looking to more creative approaches to advocacy, and to messaging aimed at government officials letting them know we are holding them in prayer and urging them to tone down their rhetoric and find ways to work together. We will also look to putting together a clearinghouse or bibliography to help congregations/people of faith create the space for respectful conversations and be effective advocates.

On the Unity and Relationships side, we have already held a statewide service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and we are planning a service/program for Black History Month. We will be activating the newly formed Commission on Unity and Relationships, as noted above, and the reactivated group of local and regional ecumenical executives to consider the ways we can build relationships across Pennsylvania and develop programs that will be helpful to our members and others.

The Service Center of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches
The Service Center of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches provides a significant communication ministry to its member churches and constituents. The Council of Churches Service Department also works with many of the agencies within the United Church Center in addition to faith-based organizations, churches, and Christian fellowship groups outside of the Center, producing print materials inclusive of business cards, letterhead, envelopes, brochures, and flyers. We also handle printed presentations, using GBC punching, binding strips, and O-ring style wire combs, as well as books, church directories and newsletters. We can laminate, fold, saddle-stitch, tab, and provide most functions of business size and traditional cut printed matter in black & white and color print, inclusive of one and two color “spot color” on an offset press.

Our printing operation makes an impact on individuals, congregations, and communities. People who are seeking counseling and spiritual help are supported by printed material from the Service Center through the agencies that we service. We work to ensure that our product and service are of the highest quality.

**Staff Sabbatical**

The Personnel and Executive Committees of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches created space and resources for Sandy Strauss, our Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach to take a sabbatical last year to learn about the ecumenical, interfaith and advocacy work that is taking place in other states. The initiative was designed to enable our efforts to learn about best practices that occur in other ecumenical settings. The following represents Sandy’s report to our board leadership:

*A Report on My Sabbatical—Fall 2020*

The Rev. Sandra L. Strauss

I want to thank the Personnel and Executive Committees for giving me the opportunity to take sabbatical time in late 2020. It was a good time of renewal and learning.

The main purpose of this time was to connect with and interview the executives of state counterparts of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches around the country. I was able to connect this activity with planned travel for follow-up concerning my husband’s cancer follow-up in Houston. We took the time to travel first to Houston, but then to do a cross-country trip where I was able to meet face-to-face with five different organizations: the California Council of Churches, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, the Faith Action Network in Washington state, the Minnesota Council of Churches, and the Wisconsin Council of Churches. While I reached out to all other state counterparts I could identify, I was able to conduct Zoom interviews with the following additional organizations:

- Arizona Faith Network
- Colorado Council of Churches
- Florida Council of Churches
- Louisiana Interchurch Conference
- New Hampshire Council of Churches
- New Mexico Conference of Churches
- New York Council of Churches
- North Carolina Council of Churches
- Ohio Council of Churches
- Oklahoma Conference of Churches
- South Carolina Christian Action Council
- West Virginia Council of Churches

My hope was to submit a truly comprehensive report of all my findings—a summary and analysis of what all the different organizations are doing, and what appears to be working particularly well and what does not. I started to chip away at doing this prior to the end of my sabbatical—though I found much of my time, once I was back in Harrisburg, occupied with work that needed to continue despite my sabbatical inclusive of my effort to provide support for Dai Morgan as he transitioned to become our interim director. Since the end of my sabbatical, I have been pretty much “flat out,” catching up and taking on
additional ecumenical activities. I still hope to do this kind of report, but I felt I needed to submit at least some key findings from these meetings.

The findings I cite below are organized based on the questions I posed in my interviews. I will complete this report with some insights and takeaways I gleaned from this work.

**Mission/Vision**

All organizations had some stated mission, vision, or both. Several had boiled them down to a catchphrase that could easily be incorporated into every communications platform and easily remembered. Examples include:

- Wisconsin Council of Churches—Justice, courage, holy imagination
- North Carolina Council of Churches—Peace in unity
- Louisiana Interchurch Conference—Living the faith we hold in common.

Those that seemed to be clearest on their mission and/or vision appeared to view what they were doing through that lens and in general, seemed much more focused on moving their organization in a direction that was in line with their mission.

**Strategic Plan**

I found a mixed bag when it came to employment of a strategic plan by the organizations interviewed. It ranged from one organization executive stating that he did not believe in strategic plans. At the opposite end, the Arizona Faith Network had engaged in a comprehensive planning process that is posted on the website at https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5948361b4c8b0338cd1b65c9/t/5d93cd4dbf92054de9888445/1569967488121/AFN+Strategic+Plan+2019.pdf. It should be noted that Arizona’s executive came from a nonprofit management background. Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon specifically noted that it had hired a facilitator to help in the process, and they continue to work with that person, who was called “very skilled.”

Other organizations have either been trying to engage in more comprehensive planning, while others are looking to update existing plans. Most noted that the constantly changing environment of their work made planning beyond a year or two difficult, and that plans needed to be somewhat flexible. However, it was my impression that most felt some level of planning was important to help focus and direct the work.

**Membership**

Many have maintained a more traditional state council membership profile much like the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, which is primarily judicatory bodies. Many, like the Council, also have categories for associate or “covenant partner” type memberships as well, but typically voting is limited to judicatory members in this profile. Others include congregational membership, some include individuals. Still others have become interfaith entities, and organizations representing other faith traditions are members. Roman Catholic membership varies from state-to-state; most interesting, however are New Mexico, which plays an integral role because it is the dominant tradition there, and South Carolina, where they are a minority but the largest contributors to the organization. Others try to maintain a working relationship and do some things together, much like Pennsylvania. At least one has “affiliated partners” that are secular organizations with common interests.

It seems like memberships have evolved based on what each state feels have become the right mtx for the organization based on what the organization is doing.

39.
Nearly all organizations did not have a set dues structure for members; like PCC, they are asked to contribute something to be able to be a member. Also like the PCC, the contributions have been declining for several years. Oklahoma did specify that it asks for $100/month, or $1200 per year, though this struck me as unfair when some bodies are exceptionally large, and others are exceedingly small. Arizona is experimenting with a structure where contributors would have access to special events, newsletter, etc. They are discussing limiting the newsletter to contributors.

Governance
Those with more traditional membership tend to have boards where every judicatory member is included, though some have moved in the same direction as the Council, with one representative for each denomination. Typically, the representative to the board can be the executive or a designee, like the PCC’s current representation. Many also have at-large positions, and/or commissions/committees. For those that have moved to interfaith, representatives from other faith traditions are also on the board. Some also include members that represent specific expertise, like legal, financial, communications, etc., and one said there was a sense that this was essential. The bottom line is that each organization has their own twist on board representation.

A number noted that attendance has been greater over the last year as boards have been meeting on Zoom and suggested that they may continue to do more work via Zoom.

Many have standing commissions or committees. Again, it varies according to what the organization believes is needed. Identified committees included executive, personnel/human resources, finance/fundraising/facilities, planning, nominating, program, and communications. Identified commissions included social justice, theological reflection, relationship building, and faith and order. Nearly all said they were taking a new look at these structures with an eye to reform. A couple even suggested that they were looking at eliminating all these groups and moving completely to task forces or ad hoc groups that would be formed to address a specific need at a specific time and dissolve when it was no longer needed.

A couple expressed dismay that getting their boards to participate in meaningful ways has been difficult and frustrating. A couple of others noted that their boards were highly active and proactive. Most appeared to be somewhere in between. Some noted that they were dealing with the fallout of previous executives.

Staffing
Nearly all have small staffs—the only organizations with large staffs are those that are providing social services, which most do not. Oregon and Minnesota both have reasonably large staffs for that reason. A couple are one person operations, perhaps outsourcing for part-time financial and administrative duties. Many permanent personnel doing this kind of work are part-time. Contracts were often used particularly for someone to do financial/bookkeeping work, rather than a hired employee. Nearly all said that staffing levels have fallen over the years, along with declining revenues. Some hire based on contracts received, so such positions are time-limited based on when funding is available.

Office Space
Only one other organization owns the building it is based in—Minnesota. Most are in either judicatory or congregational office space, and most pay some rent, but typically low. One is in donated space. Many have tried to locate in space that is close to the state’s capital to have easier access for advocacy efforts. Several noted that they have not been working in their offices since the beginning of the pandemic and suggested that they may explore models where most work is done at home with regularly scheduled
meetings to coordinate work and/or build relationships—but something that may eliminate the need to maintain permanent office space.

**Annual Conference/Annual Meeting**
Many of those interviewed no longer have a separate annual conference. Those that do have noted that attendance has been dropping for some time. Many do program in conjunction with an annual membership meeting—a keynote speaker, a panel or panels addressing a specific topic, or an advocacy event were among the activities identified.

A number noted that they are doing programming around specific issues that are priority issues for the organization, and many are grant funded—many are focused on racial justice, but several other issues were identified as well. Some had moved to more regional programming as well.

As programming has moved to Zoom, many noted that their reach has expanded as travel is not required. The cost is reduced because there is no travel and no cost for use of facilities, etc. Programming done this way may turn out to be the way of the future, though I do not believe anyone felt virtual meetings were a complete substitute for the connections that can be made when meeting in person. Several of these organizations also hold annual fundraising events, some in conjunction with their annual meetings. There is typically some cost to participate, and the program typically features a keynote or some program of interest. Some sell advertising, some have done things like silent auctions to boost revenues.

Many have either instituted or expanded virtual gatherings to help build relationships among members—regular online gatherings of clergy and/or judicatory heads, often referred to as check-ins.

**Funding**
For many, the main source of regular funding is membership, primarily judicatory members, supplemented by contributions from affiliates/covenant partners and individuals. Annual meetings, conferences and fundraising events provide additional funding for some. A couple are doing other things—Arizona is opening an on-line store to sell items, including Christmas and Hanukkah cards; South Carolina is part of an effort that produces a calendar with descriptions of different religions and featuring children’s artwork—she said they sell enough that the calendar is sent to every school. All interviewed accept grants, but the amount of support they provide varies widely. Some accomplish the bulk of their work with grant funding, while others are minimally dependent on grants.

Many noted the need to find a dependable source of funding, and the need to diversify so that they are not dependent on sources that may not be consistent.

**Website/Social Media**
Websites varied based on resources available. Most expressed that their websites were not as good as they might want them to be, and a couple noted that they were not happy with their websites but did not have the resources to do more. A handful used professional web designers to set up their websites and manage the maintenance in house. Others set them up internally and maintain them internally. A couple felt that their websites were highly effective in communicating to members and the public. Most are using social media in some way. Facebook is the primary social media outlet, with Twitter being used by some as well. Instagram is not typically used. Some felt that they were able to communicate effectively through Facebook, less so through Twitter. Most felt that they were not using these platforms as well as they could.

Several do regular newsletter, either print or online/e-mail.
Direct Services/Social Services
Oregon and Minnesota are the only two organizations that provide these kinds of services as a large portion of their work. Refugee resettlement is one of the larger areas. Oregon also engages in refugee resettlement agency, domestic violence, and food service delivery. A couple of other organizations noted that they had done some of this kind of work in the past, but no longer do.

Advocacy
Advocacy appears to be a significant part of the work of all organizations interviewed. Priority issues varied, but nearly all were considering the impacts of racial injustice on the issues addressed. A couple explicitly noted that they were looking at being a prophetic voice, realizing that they may have been somewhat out in front of some of their members. Most also work in coalition with partners, both faith and secular, to amplify their voice.

Interfaith Efforts
A handful of organizations had become interfaith in recent years. All organizations interviewed engaged in coordination, dialogue, or connection with faith traditions beyond Christian.

Learnings, Insights, Takeaways
Mission, Vision, Planning
My impression was that the organizations that appeared to be most successful and moving in a positive direction were those that had a clear understanding of mission/vision, and that it was helpful to be able to summarize in a tagline or catchphrase that could easily and quickly be referenced when explaining the organization to others. While not expressed explicitly, I would add that a clear understanding of mission must begin with a clear understanding of who/what the organization is meant to serve—who is our audience (or audiences)?

But it was more than this—it meant the clear mission should drive a planning process, where everything gets viewed through the lens of the mission and the audiences being served. It wasn’t absolutely clear that this requires the entire process reported on in the Arizona plan, but I think it would be instructive to look at what was done, because it was a comprehensive process. I particularly liked the elucidation of core values. I also appreciated that having a detached, objective professional to guide a planning group (whether the board, task force, or other) would be helpful in developing a plan that is not driven by the vision of a single person or group. I also heard that while having a plan/path is important (not knowing the direction means you may not get there!), it is also important that we not be a complete slave to the document and that there be some flexibility to accommodate changing conditions.

Membership
Our current configuration of membership as outlined in our bylaws is not significantly different from most of the organizations I spoke with. The main difference is that we have done little to promote membership among congregations, individuals, and other ecumenical organizations. Where we are different is that a number now have members from other faith traditions, mostly as affiliate or covenant partners. Our bylaws preclude membership, even as affiliate members or individuals, because those who want membership must profess Christ. A conscious decision was made in this direction in recent years, even while members of the Board expressed a desire to work more closely with other faith traditions. (I should note that I do, in fact, work on an interfaith basis about advocacy and some common worship.) Is this something to revisit?

At a minimum, it strikes me that, like some of our counterparts, we need to promote not just membership, but opportunities for participation and an understanding of what membership will provide.
However, it also should be noted that membership contributions from judicatory members have been falling for years. I think it would be helpful for part of the planning process to consider making clear what being part of the Council can mean to them. Are we offering added value to their work in a meaningful way? What can we offer that provides that value—can we reach out to ask for participation in a process to determine what they would value? Then, would it be possible that some might even consider increasing their contributions?

Question—would we want to have affiliation with appropriate secular partners as one state organization has done?

**Board/Governance**

The current configuration of our Board falls within the broad representation of board configurations described by other organizations interviewed. There are some things that might be considered, however, as possible enhancements to the Board.

At least a couple of groups have a structure where a president would have a three-year term defined by one year of service as vice president or some title that applies incoming president, one year as president, and one year as past president. This provides a year of preparation, a year of top leadership, and a year where learnings can be shared with those serving in the two earlier years.

Others have sought to ensure specific expertise on the board—legal, financial, communications, personnel, etc.—either through seeking that expertise in those appointed by their denominations or judicatories, or by creating at-large or lay positions for persons with the desired experience/expertise. Another thought was having youth representation as a way of helping to reach youth.

As for meetings, some expressed surprise that the Council’s board only meets twice per year. Others met much more often—but it also seemed that some were more working boards than others (or ours). There seemed to be some consensus around continuing to make virtual participation more available, as many found attendance had grown during the pandemic. There are good reasons for this regarding stewardship of time and resources. One state alternate between business meetings and consequential conversations. Also, should there be retreat for Board members to build relationships and perhaps training or special programming?

Regarding commissions and/or committees, most still have standing groups that vary from organization to organization. However, there also seemed to be significant questioning about the need for a cumbersome structure with multiple bodies that require regular filling of seats and expectations for ongoing work and meetings that may or may not be warranted. There was some thought that moving to more task forces or ad hoc groups was helpful in that it required (typically) shorter commitment timeframes for members and that there was significantly more flexibility in administering such a structure.

**Staffing/Office Space**

Staffing varies widely, but there are some models that might be worth considering.

Even solo executive directors typically had some support, usually part-time and very often under contract. The most contracted position appeared to be that of bookkeeper/finance person. Many of these were part-time, working roughly 10-25 hours/week. Where there was significant need for greater management—Oregon and Minnesota are good examples, where in one case, there are many programs, and the other, programs and ownership of a building. Those engaging in significant grant-related work often hired with the clear understanding that someone was being hired for a set period, spelled out in contracts. This is what gives these organizations the
ability to accept grants that benefit the organization and its members. Our Council has viewed grants only to try to cover the expense of existing employees, but such a view severely limits what the Council can accept.

We are an outlier as the owner of the building where we are located. Others have been able to keep office expenses low by occupying space provided by member bodies or local congregations—space that is often unused or underused in those locations. They have often been able to have this space close to the halls of power in capital cities. This has been a win-win because it provides some income for the landlord and significant reduction in the cost of space.

Annual Conference/Meeting
Most no longer hold a stand-alone annual conference but do have an annual meeting that is a vehicle for a keynote or presentation like what would have been done in a conference. Our Council has not had any such event for around ten years. It seems that most law around non-profits requires this kind of meeting, and even if it does not, it can provide an opportunity to reach members and others if there is a compelling program.

Other Programs
Many—most—like the Council, have undertaken to hold smaller, more specific programs, sometimes regionally, most in the 1–2-hour range. Attendance has not always been what would have been hoped for or expected, but many have seen the move to Zoom or similar platforms as an opportunity—and have found that attendance in many cases has been boosted from in-person meetings. It strikes me that shorter, more focused meetings/presentations may begin to attract more people and provide places for them to “plug-in” to work on issues of interest/passion. Also, Zoom meetings/presentations are less expensive, environmentally conscious (no travel required, no printing, etc.) and less cumbersome generally to put together and run.

Several states have implemented regular check-ins for clergy and/or judicatory executives—primarily as a supportive platform to connect folks in prayer. Some have implemented book studies and statewide worship opportunities.

Would it be worth considering some “faithful days”—weekends or Sundays—where we could provide resources and encourage all to preach or include some identified issue or prayer in congregations across the state?

Additional Funding Considerations
All organizations interviewed spoke to the constant need to address the need for adequate funding to support their work and the need to diversify. Those that are larger and appear to be moving in a positive direction generally receive revenues from a variety of sources, while those that are smaller and struggling are primarily dependent on what they receive from members. Those that provide direct services receive significant government funding, but that is not the case for those that do not. Some receive funding to do work specific to their states from funders interested in seeing that work done—farmworker ministries in North Carolina, preservation of the Grand Canyon and work with native populations in Arizona, for example. North Carolina has been fortunate to have a connection with the Duke Endowment, and they have gotten significant funding from this source—some of it for capacity building. Another is a relationship the Faith Action Network in Washington has with Rick Steves (travel writer). A couple of folks mentioned that there are specific sources available to support work around racism and racial justice—and given the interest raised in making this a priority, this is probably worth exploring. Considering shrinking judiciary funding, it is particularly important to diversify sources. However, as noted above, providing “value-added” programming might help in boosting this funding, at least to some
degree. Once a clear sense of mission is established along with a plan to move it forward, it may also be a good time to launch an effort to build membership/contributions from congregations, other organizations, and individuals. It may help as an interim measure to explore funding to do some capacity building, and/or to find funds to do some programming that could raise awareness and provide some of the value-added work that can be used in any fundraising efforts. Also, having a clear sense of direction can help in identifying and applying for grant funding to support those efforts that have been identified as clear priorities.

Some more creative approaches might include creating an endowed speakers' program, perhaps named after someone whose name is recognizable and who might even be interested in helping to attract the funds. For example, I am aware of Bishop Nathan Baxter helping Lancaster Theological Seminary to raise funds for an endowed chair—and he is a friend of the Council and might be a good person to consider for something like this. A couple are producing calendars or other items that might be offered for sale, but that would be an "iffier" proposition. However, if done as an opportunity to showcase artists or children's art, teach about ecumenism or other faith traditions, and/or provide critical dates for religious holidays of all types, it might be worth a try, and having something like a calendar would put the Council's name in front of a wider variety of folks. It could also provide advertising opportunities for others for a price, and perhaps enough that it could cover much of the cost of production.

Looking at advertising opportunities in general may be useful—where could such opportunities be made available?

Another thought—not exactly shared by interviewees but provoked by these meetings—is the possibility where a body that does not feel it has the wherewithal to become members in the traditional sense might be willing to underwrite the cost of specific programs and become members through this kind of vehicle. One state was looking at donor advised funds.

I think this is an area where we could be particularly creative.

Communications
All organizations had websites and used social media to some degree, primarily Facebook, followed by Twitter. Many also had regular newsletter or way of getting information out. It seemed that none were totally satisfied with what they had, but some were better than others.

Most managed these communications internally. However, some worked with web developers to put together websites that are attractive and efficient prior to taking over maintenance.

I cannot say that there were specific recommendations suggested by those interviewed, but the conversations provoked a few thoughts:

• The Council’s website(s) need a facelift—something that makes them more compelling to anyone who visits.

• More pictures, videos would make the site more dynamic, but we need to build getting these into everything we do and have someone prepared to do it.

• Could there be more integration between the website and social media? I know there are ways of ensuring that there is some connection among the platforms, and it might make communications more efficient.

• It would be good to release regular materials to the media and members—statements, programs, important announcements, etc. However, we need to have a procedure for ensuring this happens and directs how it is done.

• We should consider producing regular op-eds and letters to the editor from senior staff and when it makes sense, in collaboration with board members/judicatory heads.
• The WV Council is doing “public service announcements” that go out on Facebook, and FB advertising is relatively inexpensive. They have enlisted judicatory heads to participate in PSAs on COVID and other issues important to the state.

• Building a video interview archive with Pennsylvania-based faith leaders and others that could be released to our network and to the media might enhance our profile as well.

I believe it would be well worth earmarking funds to hire a professional web developer to help with the website. I learned in a recent conversation with my counterpart in UU Justice PA that they went to Indeed and found someone to do this work—someone who even had already evaluated their website and sent a mockup showing what they could do. It is going to cost them in the range of $3,000-4,000, but they will have the site remaining on the WordPress platform they were using, and it will be able to be maintained internally.

I did learn, as mentioned earlier, there is a foundation that funds some of this kind of work for religious organizations. It is not clear whether it could be used for website development, but it did sound like it could be used for things like the PSAs and video interviews mentioned above.

There is a lot more that could be done—creative, imaginative efforts. It might be worth convening a group of communications experts to help. But more than anything, I think we need a plan, driven by mission and whatever plan evolves for moving forward.

Advocacy/Interfaith Efforts
Advocacy was a significant and essential piece of the work of all organizations interviewed. Many, like the Council, once held annual advocacy days at the capital but discontinued them because attendance had dropped. However, most provide mechanisms and resources to help people engage. There was some suggestion, again, that Zoom may provide previously unrecognized opportunities to connect people virtually with legislators. Many—even those with interfaith representation, are connecting to do this work on an interfaith basis. We are already doing that to a degree in Pennsylvania, but discussions are underway about how we can do this better and be more inclusive.

General
• Executives in neighboring states have expressed interest in collaboration.
• This is such an important point in history, and it seems there is an important role for us—people looking for vision. There has been lots of deconstruction—we could help rebuild. How can we hold sacred stories, how can we be healers?
• Should we consider working more closely with labor?

Conclusion
Our experience in 2020 was exceptional and challenging. The Pennsylvania Council of Churches, however, adjusted and worked to remain relevant in promoting ecumenical engagement and advocacy throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As a foundation for our work going forward, we will take an intentional look at our future as an organization. In some ways our experience with Covid-19 is forcing all our organizations to transform our work and seek new ways of expanding our opportunities for mission and engagement. We appreciate our partnership and look forward to doing even more with you in 2021. The Council has also welcomed a new executive director, The Rev. Dr. Larry D. Pickens. He brings a great deal of ecumenical and interfaith experience to this experience. Dr. Pickens looks forward to working with the Pennsylvania Northeast Conference, as we partner to make a difference in the world around us.

Larry D. Pickens, Executive Director

46.
Phoebe Ministries Annual Report

March 30, 2021

Phoebe Ministries has weathered many storms in our 118-year history, but 2020 was a year like no other. COVID-19 has deeply affected our communities as we care for those most at risk of contracting the novel coronavirus.

We owe a debt of gratitude to UCC partners, congregations, volunteers, and donors, whose generosity enables us to combat COVID-19 and provide compassionate care and support services to our residents and their families. Last year, 137 congregations supported Phoebe's mission, and over 100 volunteers made masks and gowns to protect our employees. Phoebe received more than $97,000 for COVID-19 relief through our Connecting Hearts Campaign, as well as in-kind donations of personal protective equipment (PPE), tokens of thanks, and words of encouragement.

I am pleased to share with the Conference our annual report, which highlights Phoebe's achievements, including our response to the pandemic and our commitment to the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of our residents.

Since the pandemic began, we at Phoebe have worked diligently to protect our 1,000 frontline workers. We have done our best to keep them safe while they care for older adults at our four Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs). Phoebe responded to COVID-19 swiftly, formed an infection control team, implemented a response plan, and acquired the necessary PPE. We continue to conduct regular COVID-19 testing and administer the COVID-19 vaccine to residents and staff. I encourage you to read Phoebe's 2020 Fall Messenger and Annual Report at https://phoebe.org/news-events/publications-2/. This issue is dedicated to our employees, our organization's lifeblood, and their heroic efforts to keep our residents safe.

Physical distancing and social isolation have made a significant impact in our seniors' daily lives, by preventing them from seeing family and friends. Our Pastoral Care and Community Life staff have reinvented programs to keep residents engaged in their faith, mentally and physically active, and connected to their loved ones.

Prayer and spiritual support remain a cornerstone of Phoebe's mission and vision. Throughout the pandemic, our Director of Pastoral Care, Rev. Scott Brooks Cope, and our eight chaplains and five CPE chaplain interns have filled a great need at Phoebe, spending many hours counseling and consoling both residents and staff. To reach seniors throughout the continuum of care, the Pastoral Care team has creatively altered religious services, support groups, and meditation sessions so they can be experienced virtually. They also continue to provide residents with spiritual resources, one-to-one support, and end-of-life visits.

Community Life staff have found innovative ways to provide safe, socially distanced activities that keep residents active and engaged. Instead of group programs, daily entertainment includes hallway singalongs and party carts that travel room-to-room, televised trivia games, and remote bingo. Technology has also provided new opportunities to connect residents with their families through zoom calls, photo greetings, and video recordings.

Despite COVID-19, we continue to advance our mission and ministry. In 2020, we welcomed Rev. Dr. Hilary Barrett, Senior Pastor of the Pleasantville United Church of Christ, as Chairperson of the Phoebe
Ministries Governing Board. Our Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Endowment, which provides scholarships to our students and makes possible the training for our Certified Educator Candidate, the Rev. Leah Knox, grew to $148,434. Our CPE program received re-accreditation from the ACPE for another seven years after a rigorous review process last year. Phoebe's Office of Philanthropy began offering its Moments for Mission Program to thank congregations for their support. As part of the program, Stacey L. Prohaska, Executive Director of Philanthropy, offers churches virtual or in-person presentations about Phoebe's services and mission. Phoebe also provided more than $14 million in charitable care to residents in need; secured 69% of pre-sales needed to break ground at our new independent living community, Chestnut Ridge at Rodale; and completed significant renovations at the Harrity Community Center at Phoebe Berks.

I appreciate the opportunity to share Phoebe's achievements with the Conference. Phoebe is incredibly grateful for our faith community's generosity and commitment to those we serve.
Stay safe and well.

Peace,
Scott R. Stevenson President & CEO

Evangelical & Reformed Historical Society Report

Dear Friends,

I am excited to write to you as the first-ever Executive Director of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society! A generous two-year grant from the Arcadia Foundation has made my appointment possible. While the Executive Director position is a new paid employment role for me with ERHS, I have been volunteering with the Society since 2014.

It is also my pleasure to share with you the Society's 2020 Annual Summary (click here to view). Despite the challenged of COVID-19, ERHS has continued to move forward. The Society’s Board of Directors recently approved the following refreshed mission and vision:

The mission of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society is to stimulate and cultivate interest in the continuing legacy of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. To accomplish this, we will:
- Collect and preserve historical material;
- Make information and resources accessible to all;
- Provide engaging educational opportunities;
- Foster cooperation with other interested organizations;
- Ensure the Society has the optimal infrastructure and funding to support its ongoing mission.

In line with our mission and vision, we look forward to partnership with you in celebrating the continuing legacy of our historic E&R churches with our first-ever ERHS Heritage Sunday on June 13th. Watch for details!

ERHS is excited to enter a new chapter of growth, and we hope we can rely on your support.

Faithfully, Caroline A. Dunleavy, Executive Director