



NEWS of the 24 Churches of the York Association

**Partners in Blessing - Cooperative Mission,
Cooperative Ministry**

Like us on Facebook: [yorkucc](#)

Website: www.yorkassociationucc.org

YA Email: info@yorkassociationucc.org

SEPTEMBER 2024 – Newsletter

Mission Statement

We, the members of the York Association of the United Church of Christ, are called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to represent Christ by:

- supporting one another in our covenantal relationship;
- calling clergy and laity to mutual accountability to the faith and order of the church;
- witnessing together to God's redeeming love. (Adopted April 28, 1991)

Democracy in the Church

Recently, I needed to check on a quotidian question of governance in our congregation. When I found a copy of our church's forty-year-old constitution (I don't look at it very often), the first word of its three-sentence long preface caught my eye: "Democracy." Democracy has been in the news a lot recently. Some say roadblocks are being put in the way of those who should be able to vote; others that there are not enough roadblocks to prevent those who should not vote from voting. Seldom does the news discuss *why* democracy is or is not important. The preface of our church's constitution attempts to address the why question.

"Democracy, in the church as in the surrounding culture, is a way to guide between tyranny and anarchy," the preface begins. In this statement I hear echoes of the battles against fascism in WWII and totalitarian communism in the Cold War. I also hear echoes of the Reformation protest of top-down ways of doing church, and dismay at the decade's long religious wars and chaos that followed the Reformation among the German principalities and in England and Scotland. Democracy is a ship that steers between having only one person's convictions count and having everyone's convictions count, but no way to address differing convictions other than indifference or violence.

The simplest definition of democracy might be "one person, one vote." Sometimes churches habitually use this form of democracy. When differences arise in these churches, there is a vote, and the majority rules—even if the majority is less invested in their vote than the minority, and even if the minority is not encouraged to give full voice to their convictions. The minority may feel unheard and unloved. Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves may go unheeded.

Perhaps that is why the second sentence reads, "The governance of God cannot be equated with democracy, nor the discovery of God's will with any human ordering principle." Here is a caution against worshipping democracy or making an idol out of it. God has engaged and led God's people through all sorts of governing arrangements, even some that were utterly hostile to God's will. That is one reason why I find Christ crucified and resurrected so compelling. Perhaps we should join with Winston Churchill in his humble assessment of democracy: "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others."

So, the preface to our church's constitution concludes: "Rather, God's kingdom exists within us, above, beneath us and beyond us, "that your faith might not rest on the wisdom of men [sic], but on the power of God.' (1 Cor 2:5)" In other words, God's reigning is embedded in the very fabric of life and human relationships. We need to be attentive to God's reigning.

Jesus does not give us step-by-step instructions for how to do this. Rather, in comparing God's reign to a farmer who scatters seed, or to a farmer who scatters mustard seed, or to a woman who leavens a huge quantity of flour with yeast, etc. he invites us to engage in imagining the world God desires, a world shaped by mercy and grace, flourishing and abundance. We are to be attentive to God's ways of kindness and compassion. God's reigning is a vision to for faithful people to live for, and to live by. To live into God's reigning calls for deep listening to God and one another and God's creation. For sharing from the heart. For healing, patience, and kindness. Loving relationships are both the means and the end of our decision-making, individually and corporately. Easier said than done. And often harder than simply "one person, one vote."

How does your congregation assess democracy in its life, and its relationship with our York Association and Penn Central Conference? Your reflections are welcome, especially in time for our October and November newsletters.

Peace, Dave Martin, Pastor
davidkmartin6@gmail.com
St. Paul's UCC (Stoverstown)

**An Ecclesiastical Council for
Dr. Dominique P. Denman
is scheduled for
Sunday, Aug 25 at 3:00 pm at
Trinity UCC, York**

CORRECTION - The Rev. Jim Eaton of the Congregational Christian... denomination is serving Locust Grove UCC as a part time interim.

The **UCC Environmental Ministries** is rolling out a **Vote Climate Hope Campaign** this summer and fall.

To help your congregations participate, they have created this toolkit full of best practices, tips and more.

<https://www.ucc.org/vote-for-climate-hope-congregation-toolkit/>

Submitted by: Libby Loser



TRINITY UCC - YORK
SUMMER MUSIC SERIES!

July 21, 2024 - 1 PM
Lahoda String Ensemble

August 25, 2024 - 1 PM
Sterling Overshown - Pipe Organist

FREE ADMISSION

32 W. Market St.
York, PA 17401
Rev. Dr. Kellie Turner,
Pastor

September 29, 2024 - 1 PM
Mark Anthony Hadley - Vocal Recital

717-848-1775
www.trinityucc-york.org

Around the Association

Hayshire UCC, 100 Haybrook Dr, York

Come out and join us at Hayshire UCC for a youth-led worship on **Sunday, September 8th at 10am** and stay for our end-of-summer potluck immediately after worship. Please RSVP by calling 717-848-4007 by Tuesday, September 3rd if you are planning to attend so we have a headcount for the main course for lunch. Hope to see you there!

Locust Grove UCC, 1035 Locust Grove Rd, York

What: Chicken BBQ & Bake Sale

When: Saturday, September 7th

Time: 11am until sold out

Our dinners will include: ½ chicken, baked potato, applesauce, roll & butter, cupcake, and a bottle of water for a cost of \$11.00. We will offer eat-in or carry-out. You may pre-order by calling 717.755.1318 and leaving a message including your name, phone number and the number of dinners. All ordered dinners must be picked up by 1pm.

St. John's UCC, 161 North Main St, Red Lion

What: Chicken BBQ

When: Saturday, October 9th

Time: 11am – 2pm (or until sold out)

Dinner consists of ½ chicken, baked potato, applesauce, roll & butter. Tickets are \$12.00. You may pre-order by calling 717-244-5031. If no answer, please leave a message including your name, phone number and the number of dinners.

Zion UCC, 100 Lafayette St, York

Zion UCC is seeking a part-time **organist and/or pianist**. Salary is negotiable. Interested individuals should contact Mrs. Barbara Neiman, Zion Worship Committee Chair, by phone (717-792-1658); cell/text: (717-880-7458) or e-mail (can@gte.net).

This individual will be responsible for providing the music for our one-hour Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. and special events, as appropriate. Musician will accompany Zion's Chancel Choir during the Worship service with a thirty (30) minute warm-up session immediately before each Sunday service. Choral directing is not part of this position.

Attn: York Association UCC Clergy

The next meeting is on **September 11, at 11am**, at Lion's Pride Restaurant, Red Lion, PA

The next newsletter, OCTOBER, will be emailed September 20, 2024.

**Please send articles to
news@yorkassociationucc.org
by September 18. Thank You!**