



# NEWS of the 24 Churches of the York Association

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

## DECEMBER 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)

### York Association Participates in Penn Central Conference “Keystone Vote” Meeting

On Saturday, November 9, nineteen local church delegates from our York Association gathered at our satellite site, St. Paul's UCC in Stoverstown, for our Penn Central Conference's fall meeting. While enjoying an extended “coffee hour,” much good fellowship was shared over the course of the morning. Other York Association delegates chose to drive to Linglestown for the meeting or zoom from home.

Along with the delegates from our other Associations, we first discussed, discerned, and decided on a Budget for 2025 that will carry us, by your generosity and God's grace, through this final year of our Conference life. Delegates also affirmed the Small Town and Rural (STAR) churches resolution which will move to the 35th General Synod, July 2025 in Kansas City, MO.

At 11:30 am, 314 Penn Central Conference delegates along with delegates from the Penn West, Penn Northeast, and Penn Southeast Conferences **voted overwhelmingly in favor of the motion requesting authorization of the UCC General Synod for the four (4) Pennsylvania Conferences to become one Keystone Conference.** That motion will now proceed to next summer's Synod. If approved, which is likely, the plan is to name a transitional Board and Conference Minister by early 2026.

Thanks to Jan Taylor and the Rev. Chris Rodkey of the PCCUCC Board for keeping attendance and tallying the votes at our York Association satellite site.

*Submitted by: Rev David Martin*

### York Association Annual Meeting

On Sunday afternoon, November 10, representatives of the local churches of our York Association gathered in at Faith UCC for our Association Annual meeting. Some came early enough to enjoy a delicious lunch hosted by Faith UCC. A few minutes after 2:00 pm a quorum was declared which included a handful of people joining us viz Zoom. Thanks to Larry Bean for hosting our Zoom participants.

President Lisa Young, with assistance from our Parliamentarian for the day, the Rev. Susan Emmons, and Equilla Curry, taking the minutes, led a review and approval of our 2024 Committee and Treasurer reports, the 2025 budget, and the election of new officers and leaders for 2025. After a short break, the Rev. Eva O'Diam, the Chair of our Committee on Ministry, gathered all the officers and leaders for a joyful liturgy of (re)installation.

The Rev. Dr. Carrie Call outlined some of the challenges and opportunities that Associations would have in covenant with the new Keystone Conference. While the Keystone Conference is an effort to address the trends facing our churches and conferences faithfully and proactively across the state, because of the declining level of OCWM giving and the modest financial endowments of the new Keystone Conference, staffing will not be ideal. But Rev. Dr. Call refuses to be daunted by the challenge of preparing for Keystone. This author prays that by the grace of God, might we all be undaunted, and yet willing to walk with others in their anxieties.

She noted that we have been in the habit of thinking of the Conference as the Conference staff. In our polity, though, the Conference is all the associations, churches, and members of the Conference in covenant with one another. For example, our Association Constitution says that one purpose of our Association is to strengthen and undergird the mission and ministry of member churches and authorized ministers. Another purpose is to assist member churches and authorized ministers in situations calling for help beyond their own resources. Given reduced Conference staffing, our Association and others will need to own these purposes. For example, our Association will need to take responsibility for fellowship, bonding, and onboarding of all clergy, no matter whether they are authorized or not. A Ministerium Coordinator might address this need, as well as the need for ongoing fellowship and support. Our Association will also need to provide pastoral care and support for our clergy and surviving spouses. An Association Chaplain might best address these needs, or coordinate addressing these needs with a team of chaplains.

The Rev. Dr. Call affirmed the UCC's polity. She felt that our emphasis on covenant (mutual support) and autonomy (freedom) in our polity calls for more emotional and spiritual maturity than any hierarchical polity. Relying on the power of God's Spirit, working together in Christian love to address the issues we face in

whole and in part is the only way for us to move forward with our polity. There is no one to relieve of us of the responsibility for walking forward in faith. No high mucky mucks telling us what to do or relieving us of responsibility. No quick fixes. No deep pockets. But truly an echo of the call to “work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for God’s good pleasure.”

*Submitted by: Rev David Martin*

## News from the Committee on Ministry

**Please hold these dates for Ecclesiastical Councils in 2025:**  
January 12 (Snow date of January 26); March 2 (Snow date of March 16); May 18 and September 14.

**Celebrate with those who have special times coming:**

<b>Nov. 17</b>	<b>Rev. Amy Northridge</b> was installed at 2 pm at Mt. Zion
<b>Nov. 24</b>	<b>Rev. Dr. Dominique Denman</b> will have her ordination recognized at Trinity UCC in York at 10:30 am
<b>Nov. 24</b>	<b>Rev. David Teijte</b> will retire from St. John's UCC in Red Lion
<b>Dec. 1</b>	<b>Richard Hair</b> will celebrate with St. Jacob's in York/New Salem as their settled Pastor at 10 am
<b>Dec. 1</b>	<b>Zoe D'heedene</b> will be ordained at Bethel UCC at 3 pm

## Around the Association

**Join River City Singers, Saturday, December 7, at 7 pm at Hayshire UCC for "All That Holiday Stuff!"**

No tickets required. A free will offering will be received! Refreshments will follow! From fun to whimsical to Tiny Baby in a Manger you will feel the holiday season and leave with a smile on your face.

## Blue Christmas Services December 18<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm

**Invitations from Mt Zion and St John's**

**Mt. Zion UCC, 1054 Ridgewood Rd, York, PA,** invites you to attend our annual Blue Christmas service! This service is especially designed to offer comfort and support to those struggling with pain, grief, and heartbreak. Together, we will mark the promises of our faith through carols, Communion, Scripture, and prayer. Please join us at **7 PM on Wednesday, December 18th.**

**St John's UCC in Red Lion cordially invites you...**



**Attn: York Association UCC Clergy and MIDs**  
York Association Clergy and MIDs will meet on **Wednesday, December 11, at 11 am** for brunch at Lion's Pride Restaurant in Red Lion.

## Celebrating Wider Welcome Total Inclusion Initiative 2024

The Lutheran Camping Corp in cooperation with the Lower Susquehanna Synod is hosting a one-day retreat for leaders who are passionate about ministry with BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and immigrant/refugee communities. These may be congregational or nonprofit leaders who are tending or supporting these ministries in your congregation or central PA neighborhood. We encourage you to please pass this invitation along.

This event came about as a result of a generous grant and is offered at no cost to attendees. Participants can look forward to a catered lunch meal provided by a local ethnic-owned restaurant, live music, and a presentation by advocate and author Jamie Bruesehoff, [www.jamiebruesehoff.com](http://www.jamiebruesehoff.com).

The retreat is scheduled for **Saturday, December 14, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**, at Camp Kirchenwald, 1 Cut-Off Road, Lebanon, PA. (Free). Registration requested at the link below.

<https://www.lutherancamping.org/celebrating-wider-welcome-2024/>

**The next newsletter, JANUARY, will be emailed December 20, 2024.**

**Please send articles to [news@yorkassociationucc.org](mailto:news@yorkassociationucc.org) by December 18. Thank You!**