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Interviewing potential Staff

Article from Tammie Wisniewski, PSEC Financial Operations Manager, tammie@psec.org
Churches, like any other employers, are not allowed to discriminate and this applies generally to both lay and ordained positions. During job application interviews, care must be exercised in asking questions. In 1994, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued guidelines for interviews. Below are some general rules as to questions that may be asked during interviews:

- Are you able to perform specific job-related functions?
- Can you meet the attendance requirements of the job?
- How many days of leave did you take last year?
- Do you use illegal drugs? Have you ever been convicted of illegal drug use, sale or possession?

According to the EEOC, here is a sample of questions that you may **NOT** ask during an interview:

- Do you have any type of disability or mental health issues?
- How many days were you sick last year?
- Have you ever filed a workers' compensation claim?
- Have you ever been addicted to drugs?
- Are you taking prescription drugs?

In addition to this list there are questions that have been found to be discriminatory by courts:

- Age, year of graduation, or dates of school attendance.
- Height or weight, color of eyes, hair, complexion.
- Does one own a car?

There are many more questions that you cannot ask. Use your best judgment or seek legal advice. If it seems it may be construed as discriminatory, it probably is.

Hiring: Employment begins with an "offer letter" or "contract," which specifies the terms of employment and any conditions. Many churches offer a position with just a handshake. Nevertheless, the prospective employee deserves to know the terms of employment to include such details as salary/wage, working hours, job description, reporting relationship and such details not otherwise contained in your employee manual.

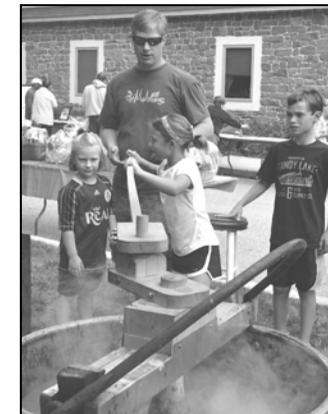
Employment-at-Will: All employees are employees-at-will. Nothing in your manual should be construed as a guarantee that any employee's employment will continue for any specified period of time or end under certain conditions. Furthermore, you should state in your employee manual, that the Church may from time to time, in its sole discretion, amend, supplement, modify or eliminate one or more of the benefits, work rules or policies described without prior notice. Whenever changes are made, updates to the manual will be provided.

Getting to Know :

UCC East Goshen

1201 N. Chester Road, West Chester, PA 19380

UCC East Goshen (founded in 1971) is an open and affirming congregation, offering hospitality, grace, and hope to all. Extravagant welcome is a guiding principal and comes naturally to our congregation. Our modest size and diversity make it easy for everyone to feel comfortable and involved. Pastor Angelee Benner-Smith has shepherded the congregation for 22 years, and she continues to inspire and challenge us through her innovative and meaningful style of worship.



In addition to services focused on the church calendar, we offer a blessing of animals and biannual services of healing and remembrance. All services are punctuated with glorious music under the guidance of the Director of Music Ministry and the voices of a dedicated choir. The musical talents of church members are also reflected during Cabaret nights when they perform Broadway style music with proceeds supporting the church music program.

Christian education is fostered through active Sunday School programs for both children and adults and through Vacation Bible School. The

church hosts a Boy Scout Troop, AA and GA meetings, and serves as a polling place. Monthly meals are prepared and delivered to the Salvation Army; the summer gleaning garden provides fresh vegetables to the homeless shelter, and our mission projects help us to grow our faith and express our gratitude.

UCC East Goshen has a contagious spirit of joy. The annual Apple Butter Festival in the fall provides an opportunity to welcome visitors for a day of fun, family activities. For two years, the church has also offered Drive-Thru Prayer during which passersby are invited to receive an individual prayer through their car window. This has allowed us to reach out to individuals who may be in crisis or are not regular church attenders.

Our Facebook and web pages share news about the church, and we are increasing our internet knowledge and presence continuously. Please come visit—in person and/or online: www.uccastgoshen.org.

Prayers are requested for Prayers are requested for UCC East Goshen in West Chester and Rev. Angelee C. Benner-Smith.

