



February 5, 2017

NEW ACM-CD POSITION CONFIRMED WELCOME REV. CEAN JAMES

At a Conference Special Meeting on Saturday January 21, 2017, PSEC delegates confirmed the selection of the Reverend Cean James to the position of Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development (ACM-CD). The vote was 186 to 1. Reverend James will begin his Conference ministry on Wednesday February 1, 2017.



The ACM-CD is part-time. But the work of church development is more than full time. We will make the best use of Cean's energy, knowledge and experience (and not burn him out) by working together in Association and other local gatherings of pastors and lay leaders. Cean is certain to work individually in some circumstances, but part-time work necessitates partnering wherever we can.

Congregational development is not new to our conference. Indeed that work began when Jesus instructed HIS disciples to GO and MAKE disciples (Matthew 28). The information that Cean will share fills books and websites and is the topic of endless conferences, retreats and workshops. What is unique about Cean is his contagious enthusiasm, hard won church growth lessons, and knowledge of our particular way of church life. He is anxious to share the "how" we bring the gospel to hurting and broken people outside of our church doors -- something many pastors were not trained to do and oft times find intimidating.

Cean's counsel and guidance, like that of any church growth guru, are only as good as our commitment to put it to work in our local churches. That requires a willingness to engage in this very difficult work which is an urgent necessity for any Christian Community looking to create a future for their congregations. Rev. James will not be the savior of dying churches. But he will be a significant partner with those determined to embody the transformative and resurrected spirit of Jesus Christ. He is new to this position and this position is new to our Conference. So, please join me in welcoming him and supporting his ministry as he works diligently to support ours.

- Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister

Getting to Know :

Immanuel UCC

99 S. Waverly St., Shillington, PA 19607

"Love You Where You Are"



Becoming an Open and Affirming congregation has been a central part of our journey as a community of extravagant welcome. Last year during Lent we hosted a five-week series with the Islamic Center of Reading called the "Jesus Fatwah."

It was an opportunity for the wider community of Reading to learn more about Islam and provided the safe space for Christians, Muslims and folks

from all faiths to engage in "table conversations" to learn and grow deeper in faith and understanding.

This year we are hosting "Love You Where You Are," a five-week program open to the larger community based on Starbucks' "Upstanders" Series. Each week we'll show



a short Starbucks sponsored video highlighting "ordinary people doing extraordinary things to create positive change in their communities." You can find the complete series at <https://upstanders.starbucks.com/>

In addition to viewing a short video each week we'll be hosting a local "upstander" for each of the five Wednesday gatherings here followed by conversation. The goal of the series is to gain better insight into the complexities and challenges of issues that matter to us and our communities. The series kicks off on Wednesday, March 8. Program themes are as follows:



UPSTANDERS

- Home for Everyone
- Breaking the Prison Pipeline
- A Warrior's Workout
- Employing the Full Spectrum
- The Hunger Hack

At Immanuel we've discovered that growing in faith requires the ability to host others as well as ourselves in a way that provides a safe space and a welcoming environment, one in which every person is embraced with dignity and respect.



Prayers are requested for Immanuel UCC in Shillington and **Revs. Dale M Davis Jr. and Megan Kay Huesgen**