



April 16, 2017

## General Synod 2017

**June 30—July 4, 2017 in Baltimore MD**

**Attention all Youth and Adults!**



In June, thousands from across the country (and abroad) will gather for General Synod 2017 in Baltimore, Maryland. Together, we will discern resolutions of witness, church structure, and function. We will stand up for issues that demand a faithful witness. And we will join together in worship each day to lift up the Stillspeaking God.

At General Synod 2017, we will "Make Glad!" as we celebrate, debate, worship and witness. Join us!

Are you aware that General Synod is open to all? Although the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference does have a slate of delegates, elected at the 2016 Spring Meeting, anyone is able and encouraged to attend General Synod and participate in the business, fellowship and excitement!

### **Youth at General Synod:**

As a youth at Synod you'll have the opportunity to participate in activities that connect faith and daily life, issues of justice, as well as leadership opportunities. Youth will participate in the plenary sessions of Synod, hear dynamic speakers, as well as worship with UCC youth and adults from across the country (and world). Youth will also participate in projects with the Maryland Environmental Center, the American Visionary Art Museum, and more. Of course, fun will also be included with a youth-only after hours dance and plenty of time for fellowship!

For more information on General Synod, for youth and adults, go to the PSEC website ([psec.org](http://psec.org)) and click on the "Calendar and Events" tab.

## **Live boldly bravely and beautifully!**

Was the tomb really empty? Folks who ask that question are also fond of the question 'can people change?' Both function with the same purpose: to avoid the possibility of "yes" and the challenge of seeing and living differently.

Our world simply cannot believe that all that goodness which on Good Friday was scourged and stretched out on a cross-- that perfect love of God which alone can cast out fear, is as alive as any of us in church today. But-praise be to God, ever since Christ burst the bonds of death and transformed a huddle of dispirited disciples there has been a chain of saints persuaded that the reign of fear is over.

I think of Peter after the resurrection, ten times the person he was before. I think of St. Francis, the name sake of the pope, kissing the leper-full on the mouth. I think of that brave Quaker woman, Mary Dyer, executed in the early days of Boston for believing "Truth is my authority, not authority my truth." I think of the Danish pastor who said, "I'd rather die with the Jews than keep company with Nazis." I think of Trevor Roberts, the last Marine of my unit killed in Iraq the week before Easter who would endure endless ridicule, criticism and isolation because he would not swear, drink, drug and fornicate not for self-righteous religious belief but for the hope that his living and loving would change the world. For those who knew him, it did.

These small acts of salvation may be an individual thing but saving grace is our shared response to the resurrected Christ. The resurrection brought into being a church, a community. Our individual selves are too small and frail; we need to support one another. We may not be able to change human nature. But we can change the nature of human relationships.

And so, dear Christians, we pull together in the colony of heaven that is the church. To live fully, bravely and beautifully we must live together. Then never mind if we are only a small, declining minority. There is no limit to what love can do. Love is a miracle. Love is a basket of five loaves and two fishes which is never enough until you start to give it away. So tomorrow, do not limp back to business as before. Join the saints who feed the hungry with the bread of this earth, and, better yet, with the bread of heaven-the resurrected body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister