



February 11, 2018

### **“May they all be one.”**

“That they may all be one.” It’s not just a motto it’s a mission. Bringing God’s people together. That is what we UCCer’s do. The United Church of Christ is committed to an intentional and radical hospitality that welcomes a beautiful rainbow of people to The Table. But everyone is capable of falling short, of failing to pay attention and missing the mark of the ideals and values to which they aspire. We pay particular attention to those “missed marks” in Lent—the one’s that keep others from the Table and those that keep us from fully opening ourselves to God.

Lent is a time of repentance “to move beyond the mind you have” or “to think differently afterward.” Both understandings say more than just “sinner change your cheating ways.” To think differently afterwards suggests an awakening to the notion that our past thinking has been wrong. And so, consequently, was our past acting.

Some of Jesus’ first Gospel words are, “Repent and believe the Kingdom of God is near.” Think differently afterwards and know that the kingdom of God is here. That is where the good stuff of life begins. In order to discover and live into the kingdom, we stop waiting for Jesus to come and do our work for us. We step from terrified spaces of rightness, look at the vastness and complexity and mystery of the universe and say, “Wow, I don’t know. Maybe I’m wrong. Maybe we can work together. Maybe all can be one.” And in that space, we’ll hear our still speaking God say to us collectively, “around the Table, in My presence, you already are.”

*- Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister*

### **THANK YOU for your 2017 OCWM Contributions!**

You have made a difference in the lives of people and communities over the last year through your OCWM support. Thank You!! Whether you shared from your Sunday morning offering or included OCWM in your annual budget, you extended the reach of the United Church of Christ to both local and global neighborhoods.

As we close the chapter that was 2017, PSEC congregations and individuals contributed \$824,448 OCWM dollars toward the work of our Conference. With those funds, we...:

- Presented workshops for pastors and lay leaders on Stewardship Development, Pastor/Parish Relationships, Church Administrators and Financial Officers Training
  - Offered Leadership and Congregational Vitality Training sessions and workshops
  - Supported the discernment work of 24 Members in Discernment on the way to pastoral ministry
  - Sponsored the participation of more than 32 PSEC youth and adult delegates at the UCC General Synod
  - Guided 43 congregations and pastors through the search and call process
  - Sent delegates to a fantastically-faith filled Annual Spring Conference Meeting at West Chester University
  - Strengthened global partnerships with fellow Cuban and German Christians
  - Called a new Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development with the call of Rev. Cean James.
- (This is a short list of the Conference activities that make up a long list of changed lives!)

Although \$37,552 short of our OCWM goal of \$862,000, our staff and Consistory held the line on expenses and ended the year in the black! Your generosity, which supported the work of the Conference, impacted lives all over God’s creation. Through the other special offerings of the UCC, disaster relief collections, and pass throughs, \$288,297 was sent through the Conference office to support causes including disaster relief, Lancaster Seminary, Bethany Children’s Home, E&R Historical Society, Phoebe Homes, etc.

In short, OCWM drives everything you do through your church, the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference and the United Church of Christ!

Thank you and may God lead you to a meaningful and prosperous 2018!