



February 17, 2019

## Stewardship Training

**March 23, 2019**

**@ St. Luke's, Trappe**

**9:30 am—12:00 pm**



This is a

Is your church in need of a good Stewardship campaign? Spend a Saturday morning learning about Stewardship good principles and practices and how to run an effective Stewardship Campaign.

**Register at: [psecstewardship.eventbrite.com](https://psecstewardship.eventbrite.com)**

## Penn Central Conference Hosting Winter ONA Gathering

The Penn Central Conference Open and Affirming Ministry Team will hold its Winter Gathering on the topic of

**"Does 'All Are Welcome' Really Mean ALL?"** on Feb. 23 from 9:30am-2:00pm at St. Paul's UCC in Mechanicsburg. The event will cover the following topics:

Why don't LGBTQ? people attend welcoming and inclusive churches?

Are there actions, signs, symbols that distract from OUR Welcome?

Graceful Engagement/ONA 101

Healing Religious Trauma

Faith Formation for people damaged and hurt by "church"

Register by emailing Shirley Keith Knox at [skeithknox@comcast.net](mailto:skeithknox@comcast.net).

There is no cost to attend, but a goodwill offering will be used to cover food costs.

## How Does Your Church "Impact" Its Community

At the beginning of each year, the UCC asks churches to complete "Year-end Reporting." Churches give stats of their membership, attendance, and finances – numbers that are later used for research, programming, and lots of other things. Last year 87% of our churches reported, and I'm so grateful for that! But one number – my favorite question – is often skipped: the Community Engagement total.

Community Engagement counts people who were served or impacted by your congregation in the last year. Some of our bigger churches have Community Engagement numbers over 10,000. Some of our smallest churches can easily have over 1,000. Those counted for Community Engagement may never attend a worship service at your church. They may never even step foot in your church or know where the building is located. But these people are influenced because of your church's unique and special ministries.

Totaling a Community Engagement number is hard, because it's not something we necessarily pay attention to. And even though it's probably not your responsibility to calculate this number for me, I'd like you to take a few minutes this week and think about the hundreds or thousands of people that your church influences each year.

Let me get you started: Are there any Scout packs, AA or NA groups, social clubs, civic clubs, or preschools that regularly meet in your space? Is your church a polling station for elections or an evacuation point for a local school? Were there any non-member weddings or funerals held at the church this year? What about dinners, craft fairs, concerts, car washes, hoagie sales, golf tournaments...? Does your church make prayer shawls, scarves, hats, or quilts to sell or give away? Do you donate to a food pantry or collect gifts for under-privileged kids at Christmas? Do community members come for your Easter egg hunt or VBS?

All of those people are important to the life of your church. I love working with pastors and secretaries to figure out their Community Engagement numbers. In a time where churches are often reporting decline in membership, Christian education, average weekly attendance, and offerings, it's important that we take time to remember all of the people that we impact each year. Churches in the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference are doing some amazing work and I pray that our members are taking time to rejoice in those successes.

Brea Rarick

*PSE Conference Registrar*