



April 21, 2019

Who is the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference? What do they do for us?

The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference is the link that connects our church's various and diverse ministries both locally and globally. Together, we provide our churches, pastors and congregations with the training and inspiration they need to carry out our church's wider mission. We are stronger together; therefore, we embrace diversity, and above all, we spread God's love!

Training comes via the many training sessions: secretary training, treasurer and bookkeeper training, stewardship training, ALICE training, pastor and lay boundary training, church development training and even church closure training to name some of the many training sessions that are available.

Inspiration can be found in the training sessions as well as the Annual and Fall meetings and the numerous retreats offered through-out the year.

Mark your calendars for the following events coming in the next few months:

May 1—Secretary Training,

<https://psecsecretary19.eventbrite.com>

May 24-26—Post High School Event,

<https://psecafteryouth.eventbrite.com>

May 31—June 1—PSEC Annual Meeting,

<https://psecannual19.eventbrite.com>

June 21-25—General Synod in Milwaukee WI,

<https://www.synod2019.org>

Mary and the Egg

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in Jerusalem, is built on the site of both the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus. Above one of the church's many altars is an ancient painting of Mary Magdalene holding an egg. Somehow, in my UCC journey, I made it from confirmation to Conference Ministry without learning the story of Mary and the egg. According to church tradition, Mary brought white boiled eggs to the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter morning. Why eggs? Perhaps as a fast food on the way to waiting for the tomb stone to be rolled aside. When she arrived at the site of the Resurrection, finding the stone already moved, she also found that the eggs in her basket had turned bright red.

After Jesus' Ascension, Mary found herself in front of Emperor Tiberius Caesar in Rome – yep, carrying an egg. Holding the egg out to him, she declared, as many of us will this Sunday, "Christ is risen!" The emperor, mocking her, said that Jesus had no more risen from the grave than would a chicken come from the egg in her hand. Immediately, the egg turned red. The Emperor, at Mary's request, removed Pilate from his post in Jerusalem. Ever since, we have been hunting the egg that would set us free from tyranny, terror and even terra firma.

Two-thousand years of Christian tradition have given us amazing stories and myths. Some, like transformed red eggs, strain the capacity for sense or reason. Others have clearly co-opted stories of earlier faith traditions. And I am okay with that. There are fundamental truths about the nature of God that flow across time and space binding us with all people who seek the Holy and Divine. The entirety of the gospel strains our capacity for sense and reason. As, of course, it should. It's not about us or what we did in the world. It's about who God is and what God is doing in the world. Fortunately, God's capacity for creativity, transformation, miracles and resurrection is infinite.

So, for this Holy Triduum I've decided to carry a white, hard boiled with me. It may or may not spontaneously change colors. But it will be a helpful reminder of the resurrected spirit God has instilled in me and in you-- the one constantly trying to break out into the world.

May it be so.

Pastor Bill

Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister