



May 5, 2019

## All of Our Churches Are in Transition!

Exodus 15: 22-25

*22 Then Moses ordered Israel to set out from the Red Sea,[a] and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. 23 When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter. That is why it was called Marah.[b] 24 And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" 25 He cried out to the Lord; and the Lord showed him a piece of wood;[c] he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.*

I think about Moses and the people of Israel a lot lately. I think about these people who left slavery and followed Moses into the unknown. They didn't know where they were going, they just left everything and followed Moses! The scripture above though shows that it didn't take them long to start grumbling. Three days without water and they started grumbling. Instead of trusting God who had made it possible for them to be freed from captivity, they grumbled! Later in their journey they even wanted to go back to the way it was—slavery!! Thank God for Moses, Moses cries out to God and God provides cool, fresh drinking water.

All of our churches are in transition! We are like the people of Israel wondering in the wilderness. We know what being church used to look like, but now things are changing and we don't really know what the church of the future will be nor do we know how to get there. With all my heart, soul, and mind, I trust that God will provide. I don't know what tomorrow holds for the Church, but I know that God holds the Church's tomorrow.

As your church wonders in the desert, I would like to suggest that you take a look at the 2017 Local Church Profile. Now, don't jump to conclusions; this doesn't mean that your pastor is leaving.

In 2017 the UCC created the new Local Church Profile for two reasons. The first reason is that this new profile can be done any time in the life of a congregation to assess who you are, who is your neighbor—meaning the people who live around your church building—and who is God calling you to become.

The second reason is that the Search & Call Process is taking too long in the UCC. Therefore, once this profile is completed, when your pastor resigns or retires, after some initial work, the church will be able to interview candidates. This will cut the Search & Call Process in half.

The new Local Church Profile will take your congregation on a spiritual journey. Unlike the old document, this will require everyone to be involved! This will enable all voices to be heard. There will be a 3-6 week discernment period where the entire congregation will be asked to be in prayer about the future of their congregation and then everyone will come together and share what they heard in response to their prayers.

If your church would be interested in doing this new thing, please let me know at [morris@psec.org](mailto:morris@psec.org) or 484-949-8774 ext. 302. I would love to hear from you and share with you this exciting possibility.

- Rev. Sharon Morris, Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call



### JOINT PNEC/PSEC DISASTER MINISTRY TEAM

**Monday, May 13 · 6:30 – 8:30pm**

**Zion Union Church, Maxatawny, PA 19539**

*A ZOOM option will be available. Notice will be sent later.*

You are invited to join with others who are passionate about helping our neighbors through **disaster ministries**. We will learn more about :

- *The UCC Disaster Ministry program and how you and your church can be involved.*
- *What our Conferences are involved in at this moment.*
- *How our churches can be more prepared.*

We will also explore how our Conferences can work together to achieve our mission.

If you are expecting to participate please respond to [kjones275@comcast.net](mailto:kjones275@comcast.net), so we can prepare for your attendance.

Shalom, Karl

**Karl Jones**, Disaster Response Coordinator

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