

Report of the PSEC Addiction Task Force 2020

The addiction task force, initiated at the 2019 annual meeting met via Zoom conferences from September 2019 to March 2020. The majority of committee members decided it best to pause efforts until the Covid Crisis for churches is settled. However, addiction does not take a pause in times of crisis, in fact the problems increase. The committee does firmly believe that we share a Christian mandate to love and care for those who suffer from the illness of substance abuse without judgement. We also believe congregations and pastors should be assisted in learning how to address this illness among members, family, and with all who might seek help from our churches. We have gathered a list of resources that we recommend to congregations that wish to learn about the disease. (forwarded material above). We are also offering four essays written explicitly for our PSEC people. These essays intentionally bring the struggle into the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The first essay is written for general congregational consideration. The second (Wits End) for parents and possibly family members of the user. The third (To A Struggling Friend). reaches out to those who may be actively or recently in an addictive state. The fourth (Pieta) to parents who have lost a child to the disease. We are asking the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference to print these essays, along with the web links (As above) and to send them by mail to every pastor and congregation in the conference so that they can be a visible and ready help when the need occurs. Hopefully the task force will be able to continue its work in the near future and be able to provide on-site council to any congregation that elects to include radical welcome to the addicts as essential to its call to discipleship. Any individuals who would wish to make a commitment to serve on this task force should contact the conference moderator.

Respectfully submitted

Rev. Dr. Deborah Rahn Clemens, task force moderator.