



February 5, 2023

## Thank you!

Thank you for the difference you have made in the lives of people, communities, and pastoral leadership over the last year through your OCWM (Our Churches Wider Mission) financial support. Whether you offered what you collected or included OCWM and other givings in your annual budget, you and your church extended the reach of the United Church of Christ.

As we close the books on 2022, PSEC congregations and individuals contributed \$738,627 OCWM dollars toward the work of our Conference. With those funds, the PSEC connects our church's various and diverse ministries both locally and globally. Together, we provide our local 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!

Although \$33,000 short of our OCWM goal of \$771,700 the Conference was able to hold the line on expenses and ended the year with a positive cash flow! Your generosity in giving, besides supporting the work of the Conference, has also impacted many lives all over God's creation. We were blessed to be able to pass through \$77,170 of your OCWM dollars to the National UCC office for their work.

Through OCWM and the other special offerings of the UCC, disaster relief collections, and pass throughs, \$258,819 was sent through the Conference office in 2022 to support causes including disaster relief, Lancaster Seminary, Bethany Children's Home, E&R Historical Society, Phoebe Homes, etc.

God bless you and thank you! Here's to a meaningful and prosperous 2023!



## The Keystone Project

In January 2022, the Conference Ministers of the four Pennsylvania Conferences gathered to discuss the urgency of issues confronting all settings of the UCC. We met with an eye toward confronting the divisions and hostilities of our world, and listening with a deep sense of our responsibility to answer Jesus' prayer, 'that they may all be one. We identified the spiritual hunger of our church people and pastors and the call to support and develop the local church. We dreamed about new ways to serve Jesus and our churches by drawing on the strength and giftedness of our clergy, congregations, leaders, and Conference staff.

We are not the church that we were when the denomination was formed in 1957 and our current contexts of ministry are different. The pandemic exacerbated the challenges we face. We acknowledge our responsibility to provide support and nourishment to the local church. We recognize our duty to find and develop the leadership needs of our congregations. We own the very real financial challenges that impact the future of our ministries.

Our four conferences share these challenges. Our response to them is strongest when we respond in partnership with each other. The "Keystone Study Group," a group of representatives from all four PA Conferences, was created to explore the possibilities of responding as one.

The first Keystone Study meeting took place October 15, 2022. The Group engaged in community building, learned of some of the statistical results of a February 2022 clergy survey, formed a group covenant, and designed expectations and possible next steps. At the November 2022 meeting, the Study Group named hopes, dreams and blocking forces to the possibility of a merged Conference, created a plan of action for future meetings, and began thinking about the form and function of a new Conference. The Study Group will meet every other month through 2023 with an eye toward crafting discussion and information sharing opportunities around our Conferences as soon as practical.

The PSEC representatives of the Keystone Study Group are Mr. Charles Kuthuru (Moderator), Rev. Melissa Burkhart (Vice-Moderator), Mrs. Robin Hightower (Consistory Secretary), Rev. Robert Fogal (Consistory Treasurer) and staff members Revs. Bill Worley, Kevin McLemore and Cean James.