

Keystone Working Group: Summary of April 19 and April 24, 2024 meetings



Please share this summary in your various ministry settings with ALL!

Meeting at the Penn Central Conference Office at St. Thomas UCC, on April 19, the Keystone Working Group spent the morning session developing possible staffing configurations based on our combined financial capacities and constraints. More specific information from the financial group helped us see the need to revise the direction of roles and responsibilities of a future Keystone Conference Model.

Attention to finances is a critical component to mapping a realistic way forward but we can't let that squeeze out room for the work of the Holy Spirit. Hope and energy inspired our conversations over the last 18 months bringing us to a more connected vision. Equipping people is essential! Inspired by the Holy Spirit to recognize the gifts of the people in local churches and Association Leadership, we spent time looking at many possibilities, creating space for future conversations. Transitioning to a new model of ministry, we must give ourselves time and grace to build scaffolding for a new model of ministry.

To end our time on Friday, the Approval Process Team presented the revised draft motion with the changes suggested last month. In consultation with UCC National, a draft MOTION is recommended rather than a resolution to Synod. Again a few changes were suggested to be incorporated prior to releasing this for review at the Annual Gathering.

Meeting through Zoom, the conversation continued on April 24. The Working Group further recognized that mission must drive our efforts and not our limitations of finances. The opportunity to respond to the needs to the local congregations will guide us to create a proactive model that equips and empowers community. Our enthusiasm continues to build as we explore our strategic vision and the scale of opportunity before us to actually live as the Body of Christ proclaiming **"Together We Are Stronger!"**

Our next meeting will focus on more details for the upcoming gathering and group conversations in plenary sessions in June. We will also focus on the hard questions of what we believe the 4 conferences merged can afford for staffing, program and offices. We look forward to exploring God's "new thing" among us.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION is now available through all 4 conferences websites! Financial Assistance is available. <https://penncentralconference.regfox.com/keystone-conferences-annual-gathering>
Our combined gathering of all 4 conference areas is **June 7-9, 2024** at State College. The hotel deadline for registration is May 6. Conference Registration continues!

The Holy Spirit continues to lead affirming, **"Together we are stronger,"** equipping the church.

Please visit the Keystone Conference Project website hosted by the PSEC at <https://psec.org/keystone/>.

We can always share questions and comments by email at Keystone.Conference.Project@gmail.com or direct mail through your own area Conference Office.
Sharing our progress relying on the grace of God!

KWG Communications Team

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*A study, discernment and working group of the 4 area UCC Conferences – Penn West, Penn Central, Penn NE, and Pennsylvania SE