

The Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ
Clergy Care for Clergy and Clergy Families
Annual Meeting Report
August 29th 2020
Rev. Dr. Ronnette Comfort-Butler

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous hand.” Isaiah 41:10

As I took on the position of Facilitator of Clergy Care for Clergy and Clergy Families, Covid 19 had a strong-hold over our country and the world leading us to a mandatory quarantine. This meant that everything was done behind the screen of a computer or tablet. This was both a curse and a blessing in terms of being able to have some time to pray and think about how this program can be evaluated and re-evaluated to fit the needs not only of the clergy and their families, but to also fit the needs of the Clergy Care Chaplains.

Recent activities as the Facilitator:

- Getting to know the Clergy Care Chaplains and asking them if they feel a commitment to continue to be a part of this team, through a workshop meeting.
- Getting to know the Institutional Chaplains who can be instrumental in helping our team when clergy are in the hospital, through a workshop.
- Each Association needed to have equality in gender participation. This is important because some clergy would rather speak to a woman or a man when needing clergy care. I am still in the process of recruiting for certain Associations.
- Offered a workshop on grief for the Clergy Care Chaplains/ Institutional Chaplains.
- Offered a workshop for Clergy Care Chaplains with Rev. Megan Malick on “Pastoring in the Pandemic.”
- Was present on many Zoom meetings where I was introduced and offered an invitation to reach out to the various Clergy Care Chaplains if there is a need. This is/was to promote the Pastoral Care Clergy Program.

Attended many workshops and meetings via Zoom:

- McCormick Theological Seminary webinars on “Healing and Grief” and “When Trauma Changes You.”
- Workshop: “Embracing Healing in these Days.”
- Wabash: “Self-care as we care for one another.”
- Gestalt Pastoral Care 6 week online workshop: “Embracing Healing in these Days.”

- Penn Central Conference Board meetings; staff meetings; worship planning; Poetry as Prayer; Book groups; Conference check-ins and more

Resource Development:

- Developed a Spiritual Director list for the Penn Central Conference website.
- Developed relationships with various institutions i.e. hospitals, agencies etc. to have them available if there is a need with one of our clergy members or their family members.
- Designing workshops that will be offered 4 times a year for the Clergy Care Chaplains.
- Research on workshops that will become available that are beneficial to the Clergy Care Chaplains (who will be invited and encouraged to attend).

Chaplain to the Conference staff and clergy/clergy families:

- I am available if the members of the Penn Central Conference staff need pastoral care in addition to the Clergy Care Chaplains and their family members. This is done with extreme confidentiality.
- Numerous phone conversations, emails, letters and cards in response to the clergy in need due to grief, loss, health concerns, hospital visits and treatments.

Misc:

- Designed the new brochure for the Penn Central Conference Clergy Care Chaplaincy Program.

These have been trying times for all people but especially for clergy. I feel that our Clergy Care Chaplains are readily available if there is a need. I have confidence in each of these Clergy Care Chaplains as well as the staff at Penn Central Conference.

Respectfully Submitted by,
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Facilitator of Care to Clergy and Clergy Families