

Financial Brief

2022 Audit was clean. 2023 Audit is underway.

2023 Summary

Revenue

Budget \$877,074 (\$733,627 OCWM income \$38,000 below 2022 and almost \$80,000 below budgeted amount)

Actual \$798,303 (\$78,771 under budget because we chose not to pull from our investments as originally planned)

Expenses

Budget \$877,074

Actual \$858,554 (while this comes in below our budgeted expenses, it exceeds our actual revenue by about \$60,000 all of which was planned to come from our investments. Our investments are growing faster than the interest rate we are receiving on our bank accounts and our cash balance was sufficient for now.)

2024 Update

Revenue through April 30

Budget (1/3) \$316,933 of \$950,800

Actual \$289,767* (30% of our budgeted revenue)

**Revenue is higher because PCC is the holder of all PA Meeting funds at this point and will be responsible for the disbursements following the event.*

Expenses through April 30

Budget (1/3) \$314,933 of \$944,800

Actual \$233,663^ (25% of our budgeted expenses)

^Again, expenses for all PA Meeting will come out of PCC revenue so there could be a couple months of wide swings before this levels out.

OCWM through April 30 (this will help give a better financial picture)

Income \$186,063 (24% of OCWM budget with 33% of the year behind us)

Full financial information is shared with the board monthly and reviewed at their meetings.

The 2024 Budget was passed at the Fall Meeting in November 2024. The 2025 Budget will be presented in the Fall for vote on November 9th.

Report of the PCC Church Futures Commission

June 3, 2024

The operational mission of the Church Futures Commission (CFC) is to **help churches discern their present challenges and opportunities and to determine a positive path forward**. The CFC has met monthly since its inception following the 2023 PCC Annual Meeting. Since then, the CFC has created an interactive webpage accessed through the Conference website. While the resources link on this page is constantly under development, persons interested in working with an International Coaching Federation (ICF) trained coach can schedule directly with our coaches.

The CFC presented information about its webpage via Zoom to interested pastors and congregational leaders in November 2023. The CFC also presented a workshop at the recent Clergy Convocation and shared information about its work at the Harrisburg Association annual meeting. Finally, the CFC will present a workshop at the 2024 PA UCC Conference meeting, and its leadership will be present in the planned Affinity Groups of the same event.

Over the course of the past year, the CFC has provided coaching or facilitation services, addressed concerns, or made referrals to external resources to 13 churches across the conference. We currently have one pastor receiving coaching services and another who has expressed interest in being trained as a coach.

The CFC is currently working on the development of a grant program to provide some support for pastors and congregations in their efforts to discern their immediate and long-term futures.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Gibbs
Coordinator, Church Futures Commission

Facilitator of Clergy Care

Report to Penn Central Conference

June 8, 2024

I want to begin by thanking everyone in the Penn Central Conference that reached out to welcome me to this position of Facilitator of Clergy Care. I began this shared ministry position on May 1, 2024, along with being the settled pastor of Quentin UCC in the Lebanon Association. The transition from a 22-year pastorate to this newly imagined shared ministry has been a learning experience and a deeply meaningful one. Thank you to Carrie, Nora, Paul,

and Ronnette, as well as Rev. Rick Luciotti who recently retired from this position, for helping make the transition a smooth one.

The Facilitator of Clergy Care position is not a one-person ministry, but it is a team approach to caring for our PCC clergy and their families. Carrie and Nora, along with a team of volunteer Association “chaplains,” work together to offer pastoral support, as well as additional counseling referrals and emergency financial assistance on a person-by-person basis. Pension Boards Annuitant Visitors within the PCC also connect with our retired clergy and may suggest people with whom we can connect for further care. This ministry to our more than 300+ clergy in the PCC cannot be done by one person. So, this team approach is crucial to effective care for our clergy both active and retired.

While I’m still living into this position, in the first month our team has made more than 25 “care contacts” with our clergy and/or their relatives with differing needs and life situations. A care contact could be a phone conversation, an in person visit or conversation over a meal, a Zoom conversation, or a visit to a home or a hospital, or our presence at a funeral or significant worship service. In the coming months, I hope to add “Days Apart,” one-day retreat times for our clergy that would allow for spiritual reflection, discernment, or time away for self-care.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the clergy in the Penn Central Conference in this way. Please be in touch if you have a need or know someone who does, and we’ll do our best to be a support.

In Peace ~ Rev. Dwight C. Hein, PCC Facilitator of Clergy Care

Outdoor Ministry Report (Rev. Dr. Nora Foust)

Youth Retreat (led by Revs. Ron Oelrich, Carol Price, and others) brought together almost 50 youth and adults for a weekend in Hartman Lodge for God’s Dance Party! This project was an **Outdoor Ministries grant** recipient and youth participants received **50% scholarship** from the Outdoor Ministries Fund.

Summer Camp Opportunities (Campership Code PCC2024)

- Lutheran Camping Corporation offers camps at **Kirchenwald** in Lebanon and **Nawakwa** in Biglersville. Both camps offer a full summer of camping opportunities for children and youth of all ages, including adult, elder, and family camps. New for 2024, all camps end on Friday evening. Volunteer opportunities are also available at **The Wittel Farm Growing Project** in Elizabethtown. Check them out at <https://www.lutherancamping.org/> All UCC campers are eligible for **campership** from the **Outdoor Ministries Fund**.

In summer 2023, both LCC camp sites combined to host more than 500 campers. PCC is a small percentage of that number, but with these amazing camping opportunities, we’d love to

see it grow every year! Volunteerism and retreat opportunities at The Wittel Farm have also been very meaningful for a number of church groups as well as individuals across Penn Central.

- With the volunteer leadership of Revs. Alice Rauch and Betsy Bruaw, PCC continues to host an **HC Spirit Week** each summer! This summer, camp will return again to the campus at Hartman Retreat Center **July 28-August 3**. A variety of opportunities for all ages are packed into this weeklong event and more than 100 campers and volunteers are already registered. See more at <https://pccucc.org/outdoor-ministry/> or visit the table here at Annual Meeting. This program is the recipient of an **Outdoor Ministries Grant** and all campers are eligible for **camperships** from the **Outdoor Ministries Fund**.

In 2023, more than 130 campers and volunteers returned to Hartman Retreat Center for the HC Spirit Homecoming Event. It was a fun and Spirit-filled week of all things camp and we are excited to continue the long tradition of camping. **Join us this summer!**

The Outdoor Ministries Fund offers grants conference-wide for local outdoor ministry projects including community or pollinator gardens, green-church upgrades, outdoor worship spaces, creation justice programming, and more! There does need to be a congregational education part to the project. In just a year and a half, the **Outdoor Ministries Commission**, chaired by Rev. Alice Rauch, has granted **more than \$71,000 to local church projects and conference-wide programs**. The fund has also awarded more than **\$10,000 in camperships** to HC Spirit and LCC campers. Get your grant application here: <https://pccucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Grant-Application-2024a.pdf>

Commission on Ministry Report (Rev. Dr. Nora Foust)

The Penn Central Commission on Ministry consists of the chairs of all Committees on Ministry and an additional member from each group where possible. It meets 5 times a year and discusses trends, best practices, includes learning opportunities, and provides the annual compensation guidelines to the board of directors for approval.

The Synod mandated **Manual on Local Church** is now available at <https://www.ucc.org/manual-on-church/> and I have encouraged all Committee on Ministry members and Board of Director members to read it and offer feedback to the writing groups, as well as watch for webinars from the writing group. The final draft will be presented at General Synod next year. I encourage each of you to take a look, and to invite your local church council or consistory to do so, too! There are a number of **church life discussion starters and opportunities for UCC Identity Education** embedded in the document. I am excited to be invited to those local conversations!

Search and Call, well, the creativity necessary in today's search environment, continues to be a hot topic for Committee on Ministry discussion. In the past year, 27 pastors have begun new calls across the Penn Central Conference. Nine of these were already PCC pastors who moved

from one setting to another. The other 18 have come from our pews or from other denominations. We have a number of pastors serving who hold Lay Ministerial Standing (licenses - 7), some with Dual Standing (maintaining standing in their ordaining denomination and the UCC while serving among us - 2), some coming into the UCC via Privilege of Call (moving their ordination fully into the UCC - 1), and others serve without UCC standing (6). It is the hope of Committees on Ministry that all serving pastors will seek standing in some way, but short of that, entering a covenantal agreement with the Association COM is encouraged.

Small, Rural, and Shared Ministries are also on the top of minds. Penn Central is a conference of small, mostly rural churches. Across the conference, we average 48 in attendance each week. Our average membership is 135. These numbers come from the annual yearbook reporting so we assume they are a little off as only about 60% of our churches complete the annual yearbook forms. (READ HERE a PLEA to complete your forms each February/March.)

We are aware of at least 5 new, likely more, settings where a **team ministry** is being used to fill the pastoral role. One authorized clergy with lay-authorized and not-authorized team members assisting with everything from preaching to teaching to administration and visiting, sometimes in a single church but often across multiple congregations. Reach out if you are interested in learning more about how this team approach might work for your setting.

Penn Central Conference currently has **20 Members in Discernment (MID)** seeking ordination. Fifteen of those are already serving in a congregation on a regular basis and not necessarily seeking a call. In November of 2023, our MID Assessment Team hosted an afternoon event at St. Thomas inviting our MIDs and their COM Chairs and Advisors to learn more about the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers and the Portfolios used for assessment beyond and in addition to formal degree completion. PCC is excited to join the other PA Conferences for a MID retreat January 3-4, 2025 with 50 possible MIDs to be held at Hartman Retreat Center in Milroy.

Compensation Guidelines are in-process and will go to the board for their August meeting. If you need a draft version prior to August, please contact me (nfoust@pccucc.org).