



**Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
of the
United Church of Christ**



Conference Profile & Job Description

for the

**Interim Associate Conference Minister
For Search and Call
(Full-time)**

2019

1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100, Pottstown, PA 19464
www.psec.org

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To: Prospective Interim Associate Conference Minister Candidates

From: PSEC Conference Minister, Rev. Bill Worley and Ms. Jennie Strauch, Conference Moderator

Dear Friend,

Greetings from your friends of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ -- a collection of 160 congregations and affiliated ministries that seek to be agents of redemption and transformation. Thank you for taking time to discover and discern the exciting possibility of being brought together to affect the world for good and for God!

We are a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, theologically and economically diverse group. We include people who have a deep and abiding attachment to United Church of Christ as well as people whose connection is made tenuous by social-theological differences. Regardless of our place in life, every one of us is part of a Christian congregation that faces the general decline of religious affiliation in America and the uncertainty over what future form Christian discipleship and community will take.

Those who understand that new occasions teach new duties are growing into new ways of being that are shaped by our Conference's 2020 Vision Plan adopted in 2015 by the Conference Consistory. We know that the way into a vitalized, faith filled future requires growing disciples, well trained and informed lay leaders, and groups of people willing to meet the ever-evolving ways that church organizes itself in praise to God and service to the community.

We have been blessed by the exceptional leadership of our most recent settled ACM/SC who, for seven years, worked diligently to facilitate the placement of pastors amid some of the most anxious times of transition a congregation can experience. The task of this interim period (which we anticipate lasting for one year) is to continue the high level of service expected by Conference members while Conference leadership discerns the current and future needs of our ministry related to this position. We seek a person who is authentic and self-aware, confident in their relationship with Jesus Christ, comfortable claiming and sharing authority, values transparency in all things and has evidence of a call to teach non-anxious, adaptive leadership and church growth.

If you are a person who continues to nourish a vibrant relationship with God, who seeks the Spirit for wisdom, and lives the teachings of Jesus the Christ, we invite you to explore our Conference through the information shared in this profile and at our website.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Bill Worley and Ms. Jennie Strauch
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference

CONFERENCE BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

The PSEC is a region where some of the United Church of Christ's earliest traditions still find expression alongside new and diverse congregations from a variety of cultures. As we enter into the next era for the Christian church, we have imagined a new vision for our congregations, our Associations, and our Conference. Our churches are especially being called to reconsider practices and traditions related to financial, human, and facility resources that include the challenges of sharing pastoral leadership. Our Conference leaders are expected to support and model those practices.

PSEC AT A GLANCE

The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference (PSEC) is comprised of 160 UCC congregations with 38,000 members in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties in the southeast corner of the state.

In the PSEC today, you can still encounter people whose faith and future are grounded in their identity as inheritors and stewards of the German Reformed tradition who are joined with congregations from several different ethnic and theological backgrounds.

We have recently welcomed into affiliation African-American, East Indian and Spanish-language congregations. We have union churches, shared ministries and federated congregations that combine UCCer's with Lutheran, Schwenkfelder, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, United Methodist, and Baptist traditions. We are also in international partnerships with the Evangelische Landeskirche Anhalts in the former East Germany, the Church of South India and the Federation of Baptist Churches in Cuba.

We strive to strengthen our relationships in support of each other through conference annual meetings, retreats, training events and an annual clergy convocation. We've become much more intentional about ministerial support and accountability among our Associations. Our compact geography means we can (with relative ease) bring together this diversity to strengthen connections within our small portion of the Body of Christ.

In between Conference meetings, we are led by the Conference Consistory which meets bi-monthly and consists of 5 officers and 10 members elected from each of the 5 Associations. The Church and Ministry Council, comprised of representative Committee On Ministry members from each Association, provides oversight to all facets and phases of authorized ministry.

In the past five years, the PSEC has paid off past debt, reduced its current expenses to within its income and created significant equity to make investment in, and funding for, new ministry opportunities.

MINISTERS and SUPPORT STAFF

The role of the Conference staff is to coordinate and communicate the events, information, opportunities and resources necessary to connect and support pastors and grow congregations. The PSEC staff has recently known a time of effective relationship and team building and is one of the known strengths of the Conference.

Conference Minister – is the spiritual and administrative leader of the Conference and is responsible for collaboratively developing and implementing the Conference vision, mission, goals and policies.

Working with the Associate Conference Ministers, Conference leaders and professional staff, the Conference Minister is responsible for directing and modeling all areas of Conference life and leadership.

Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call (ACM/SC) works full-time with Association Committees on Ministry to identify, prepare, authorize and oversee ministerial leaders. The ACM/SC works closely with congregations at all stages of the search and call and pastoral transition process and gives oversight to the Pastoral Excellence Program.

Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development (ACM/CD) works part-time to help congregations increase their mission focus, deepen Christian discipleship and maximize church growth potential in all facets of congregational growth and vitality. The ACMCD operates at the group level and not as an individual counselor or congregational coach.

Support Staff Positions - The Conference has two full-time support staff positions:

1. Executive Associate for Conference Communications and the Conference Minister manages and coordinates communication with Conference clergy, lay leaders, Associations and the National Office and functions as the Executive Assistant to the Conference Minister.
2. Associate for Search and Call and Conference Registrar provides direct support to all facets of the Conference Search and Call process as directed by the ACM/SC and maintains current records on every authorized minister and congregation in the conference.

The Conference also has two part-time support staff positions:

1. Financial Operations Manager
2. Conference Bookkeeper

CONFERENCE PROGRAMS:

This is not a comprehensive list but among the highlights are:

1. Pastoral Excellence Program (currently 14 active Communities of Practice)
2. Justice and Witness initiatives recently adopted at the Fall 2019 Conference meeting focused on addressing climate change and addiction
3. Ecumenical exchanges with partners from Evangelische Landeskirche Anhalts, the Church of South India and the Federation of Baptists in Cuba
4. Member in Discernment Academy and Events and a new Conference MID Coordinating Committee
5. Reimagined Spring Annual Meeting Weekend
6. Bi-annual Youth Events
7. Clergy retreats for men, women and annual Clergy Convocation
8. Stewardship development (this January 2020 we host "Cultivating Generous Congregations" sponsored by the National office for Stewardship)
9. On going lay leader training—bookkeepers, church administrators, pastor-parish relations teams, stewardship teams.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Current Support

The 2020 operating budget is based on \$893,890 in OCWM contributions and an additional \$135,405 from various income sources to match an expense budget of \$1,034,295.00. A "New Ministries Fund" of just under \$70,000 was created from the sale of PSEC's outdoor ministry center

(Camp Mensch Mill) and the Church House—the former home of PSEC offices. Local congregations have begun to make application for those funds to support new ministries in their local churches and communities. We have also completed successful participation in the UCC Pension Board Ministerial Assistance Campaign making an \$80,000 plus contribution to that effort.

Current Debt

The Conference currently carries no debt and owns no property. We lease office space in a recently constructed facility at 1441 Laura Lane, Pottstown, PA. At the 2019 Fall Annual Meeting, Conference delegates approved a proposal to explore moving to a mobile office platform. While that may not be implemented during the Interim ACM/SC tenure, participation in the fact-finding phase will be an expectation of the Interim candidate.

Current Investments

Invested reserves and endowment funds total just over \$1.2 million. The operating budget has historically included a drawdown of six percent (6%) of invested funds. We set a goal four years to reduce that to 3% and this year have reached that goal.

INTERIM POSITION SUMMARY

The PSEC has come through several difficult years to a time of renewed hope and energy. Where effective, visionary leadership has taken hold, pockets of dynamic change and transformation in the lives of both people and parishes are happening. We expect the interim ACM/SC to be a significant part of building on that.

The Interim ACM/SC will have primary responsibility for the maintaining our Conference's search and call process. The Interim will develop relationships with local lay leaders and congregations engaged in the search process to facilitate the process for identifying and placing permanent, interim and supply pastors. In addition, the Interim will assist the Conference Minister, in cooperation the Conference Staff, with the general responsibilities of pastoral care, administration, and leadership development at all levels of denominational life and serve as the Acting Conference Minister when the current CM is away from the office.

In accordance with UCC Search and Call covenantal practices, the interim ACM/SC will not be permitted to apply for the settled ACM position. A full description of the interim position in the Interim ACM/CD Position Description on the following page.

INTERIM ACM/SD APPLICATION PROCESS

If you are feeling called to apply, please make a thorough review of all the information in this prospectus. Submit your UCC Ministerial Profile to PSEC Conference Minister Rev. Bill Worley via worley@psec.org. If you have questions, please call Rev. Worley at 484-949-8774, extension 308. Your application must be received no later than Tuesday, December 31, 2019.

CONFERENCE POSITION DESCRIPTION
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
United Church of Christ

Position Title: Interim Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call
Approved By: Conference Consistory
Date: December 6, 2019

Reports To: The Conference Minister

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Interim Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call (ACM for S&C) will have primary responsibility for the maintaining the search and call process of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Interim ACM for S&C will develop relationships with local lay leaders and congregations engaged in the search process to facilitate the process for identifying and placing permanent, interim and supply pastors. In addition, the Interim ACM for S&C will assist the Conference Minister, in cooperation with the Conference Staff, with the general responsibilities of pastoral care, administration, and leadership development at all levels of denominational life.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Have primary responsibility for the search and call process for all congregations within the Conference.
- Develop personal relationships with individual congregations involved in the search process, providing as much assistance and guidance as each individual situation warrants.
- Work with individual congregations and pastors to provide effective interim pastoral placements that are focused on assisting congregations in transition.
- Develop personal relationships with lay and ordained leaders of churches in transition to provide guidance and resources that meet the needs of these congregations.
- Work cooperatively and collegially with the Conference Minister and staff to provide effective administrative leadership (i.e. maintaining pastor's files, contacting other denominations when pastors are seeking dual standing or privilege of call, validate ministerial and local church profiles, assist in coordinating candidating weekends, vetting potential candidates outside PSEC, signing call agreements).
- Provide effective oversight of the Associate for Search and Call and Conference Registrar.
- Develop positive working relationships with the leadership of the Associations.
- Work with Conference staff to provide leadership development to both clergy and lay leaders throughout the Conference.
- Have oversight of the Pastoral Excellence Program and the Communities of Practice.
- Actively recruit individuals within the Conference and throughout the wider church to fulfill the needs of the churches involved in the search process.
- Provide guidance and coordination for the Church and Ministry Council and assist the association Committees on Ministry.
- Schedule (and when practical, facilitate) regular boundary trainings for clergy, interim pastor training and Committees on Ministry training and orientation events.
- Perform ministerial functions on behalf of Pennsylvania Southeast Conference as directed by the Conference Minister.

Compensation:

Salary and benefits commensurate with experience according to Conference Guidelines
<https://psec.org/resources/compensation-guidelines/>

“2020 VISION”

PENN SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE UCC

Vision— a unified portion of the Body of Christ moving in a collaborative direction to effect for God and for good the lives of all people living in Southeast Pennsylvania and beyond.

Mission— strengthen local churches and pastors by making the seven Associations of the Penn Southeast Conference agencies of connection and accountability.

Objectives-- Keeping Jesus and the gospel at the heart of everything we do, by 2020 we will create an ethos of expectation, experimentation and transformation by:

1. offering 4 on-going Conference-wide vitality training experiences annually.
2. offering 3 spiritual retreat opportunities for clergy (i.e. Women’s Retreat, Men’s Retreat, Clergy and Spouses Retreat) annually.
3. annual training events instituting the Manual on Ministry as the normative practice for Church and Ministry committee work in the Conference;
4. offering web connection capacity for at least ½ of the conference meetings hosted at the conference office.
5. turning our churches inside out to focus on local community transformation as much as church tradition, growth and discipleship. We want to see 5 cities or towns being positively affected by the presence of a UCC congregation as measured by the quality of life standards (i.e. education, housing/homelessness, crime reduction, employment opportunities, health/wellness) of those communities;
6. preparing for the birth of six new vital spiritual communities through recruitment of excellent entrepreneurial leaders to lead the effort, recruiting partner churches to provide support and infrastructure, and raising funding to adequately empower the movement;
7. increasing OCWM pledges from the 169 churches of the Penn SE Conference 2% each year through 2020;
8. remembering that church growth is a byproduct of a vital spiritual community, we will connect local congregations to training, inspirational experiences, networking opportunities and congregational coaches with the goal of increasing active participation in 80 of our churches by 10%.

9. developing an expectation of pastoral excellence among the Authorized Pastors of the conference,
 - By providing a clergy coach to each pastor for the first year at the beginning of a new ministry.
 - every pastor in the conference will be in an accountability and support group with three other clergy;
10. financially supporting people called to Authorized ministry by establishing (via a conference wide campaign) a \$4 million endowment fund for PSEC clergy that will:
 - Assist authorized pastors currently serving in local ministry settings with the reduction of debt related to seminary education.
 - Finance 50% of all seminary related training costs for highly qualified leaders seeking ordination to parish ministry.
11. creating a Member In Discernment Academy to standardize the training of potential clergy in the essential practices of ministry excellence in the Penn SE Conference;
12. identifying and resourcing at least 5 congregations who want to experiment with new ministry models and collaborative partnerships;
13. developing a strategy and beginning conversations with 5 congregations nearing the end of their life together to explore the investment of their legacy gifts in the starting of new ministries in the conference;
14. identifying at least two social justice issues impacting the communities in our conference, offering prophetic witness through op-ed pieces, protest rallies, social media campaigns, member education and all other effective means for the advancement of just and generous Christian values;
15. strengthening the covenantal connections between local churches, Associations and the Conference as evidenced by a 20% increase in attendance at Conference sponsored events, especially Annual Meeting;
16. reshaping the Annual Meeting experience to communicate our ethos of expectation, experimentation and transformation.
17. laying a foundation for at least two ministry hubs in ethnically diverse urban-centers of the conference;

Together, we now shift the narrative of Mainline decline to a story of hope for a generative future. We are the model for those seeking transformation in their denominational settings across this nation. We believe in the God of resurrection, and in God we place our faith and hope.

Approved, PSEC Conference Consistory, September 29, 2015.