

Report of the Associate for Youth Ministry

Over the course of the last year there have been some exciting things in regards to our youth! As many of you recall, a year ago at this time we were extremely busy preparing for our trip to the National Youth Event in Orlando, Florida. I am pleased to report that a total of 31 youth from around our conference attended the event. For many of those attending this was the first time they had been to a UCC youth event! During our time in Orlando, we worshiped with 3500 other youth from around this country and some from around the world, we spent time in a variety of workshops specifically catered to our youth and went out into the community to help with the revitalization of an outreach center located in the heart of downtown Orlando called United Against Poverty. And....of course we sprinkled in some Disney fun and magic.

Following NYE...it was time to start looking ahead to the next Regional Youth event, which occurs every four years. Both the National and Regional Youth events are special because unlike our Annual Gathering and Meeting and General Synod, they are completely focused and designed for our YOUTH! Over the last year, I have been working very hard, behind the scenes if you will, with the other conferences in our region to bring the 2018 RYE to life. It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Penn West Conference has been chosen to host the 2018 Regional Youth Event! So what does this mean? For starters, we will be welcoming youth from all 4 of the Pennsylvania conferences, New York and Central Atlantic, in addition to the Connecticut conference and possibly Rhode Island and Massachusetts. We are anticipating a gathering of 350+ UCC youth coming together from July 19th-22nd, 2018 at CalU. We, as a conference, need to band together to help make this wonderful experience for all. Throughout the next year, there will be plenty of opportunities for volunteers lend a hand. Additionally, we will need volunteers to help during the event. I invite you to stop by the bookstore at the annual meeting find out ways for you to be involved.

OTHER PROJECTS/RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Consulting with congregations on issues pertaining to their youth ministry.
- Compiling an up to date data base of contacts within our congregations that serve our youth.
- Providing our youth leaders with resources and training opportunities.
- Planning conference youth mission project/trip for the upcoming year.

PARTNERS IN FAITH FORMATION:

The Penn West Partners in Faith Formation is an integral part of the conference and more specifically my position within the conference. It is essential that I have a working committee to assist me in executing projects and especially with the upcoming Regional Youth Event. This committee is in need of volunteers to come on board and be part of this committee that is focused on our children and youth. If you are interested in learning more about this committee, please contact myself or Mary Alice Lynn (committee chair)!

Respectfully submitted,

Valarie Poole, PWC Associate for Youth Ministry.