

REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTS

JUNE 2019 PENN WEST CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING

All meetings are opened by prayerful devotions. We attend to the business at hand, and then each president shares things of note that are happening within their association. It is in the sharing that we learn from one another, and foster a stronger sense of community within the conference. Always our meetings are closed with prayer.

What has been most helpful in having perfect attendance no matter what the weather is the use of ZOOM, an internet video and audio conference call. It is not only convenient, but helps us practice good stewardship for those who do not live near Greensburg.

Since the June 2018 Penn West Conference Annual meeting, we met four times.

August 6: Previously we sent out a questionnaire offering possible foci for the 2019 All Association meeting. We had 128 responses with the majority choosing a worship/music celebration. The presidents thought it was a great idea to explore a possible music festival or faith revival. We settled on the theme "Holy Fire" and chose Rev. Kim Kendrick of Living Water Church in Philadelphia to be the guest preacher. Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz was charged with organizing the worship and music around the sermon text chosen by Rev. Kendrick.

Needless to say, the Faith Rally became our focus for the following three meetings as we developed the theme, decided on an offering designation, chose a site for the event, and visited the Ebensburg Church to finalize details of the event.

About 160 people were present from about 36 of our churches. Twelve churches sent a total of 46 choir members to give musical inspiration. Julie Sexton, the choir director from Christ United Church of Christ in Latrobe, was our director, Regina Fenton, the organist from Trinity United Church of Christ in Greensburg was our accompanist. Tim Danehy from Trinity United Church of Christ in Dorseyville was our percussionist, and the Ebensburg Bell Choir, under the direction of Ann Maken, gathered us with beautiful uplifting anthems.

Rev. Joseph Beer did two excellent interactive biblical presentations. Harvey Noel and Joyce Weber shared their faith experiences which inspired us to think about our own faith experiences. Rev. Kim Kendrick gave a very inspiring sermon which had us ready to "Turn Our Lights On!" And turn our lights on we did with 36 candles representing the churches in attendance that created a Holy Fire right on the altar. It was a vision! Rev. David Ackerman gave us a final charge to go serve the Lord with Holy Fire in our souls.

And the day was not finished. We had about 30 minutes to gather in our associations to talk about what we just experienced and how we might take this energy to our churches, and then move to the social hall for a delicious banquet and more conversations around the dining tables.

Many thanks to: those who helped with the development of the worship; Rev. Shirley Musick who artistically created visual inspiration in the registration area and in the sanctuary; those who read scripture; helped with registration; served food; set up the Sheep Fund baskets; filmed the event; and helped direct the flow of the participants to the sanctuary, the break out rooms, and the social hall.

Special thanks to Trista Lucas and the members of Ebensburg church who showed extravagant welcome and hospitality to everyone throughout the day.

IT WAS A GREAT DAY!

Respectfully Submitted by the Association Presidents:

Dina Johnson

Rev. Mary Hendricks

Jill Marie

Rev. Dr. Joe Beer

Bob Krue

Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz