

Penn West Conference Committees and Ministry Teams 2020

*“The Penn West Conference: Engaging in Covenantal Relationships; Sharing God’s Love with All!”
Teams and committees work within the Conference to offer individuals the opportunity to be a witness beyond their local church. Each committee and team is charged with supporting our churches, pastors and laity as they labor together to bring God’s love to all people.*

Board of Directors

The Board serves as stewards of the ministries and missions of the Penn West Conference between the Annual Meetings. They are charged with managing the financial and leadership gifts that churches and members give to it through Our Church’s Wider Mission. Members are elected by Associations and Officers are elected at the Annual Meeting. Our Moderator (for 2019-2020, Tom Croner), Assistant Moderator (for 2019-2020, June Boutwell), and Conference Minister (David Ackerman) are ex-officio members of all our teams and committees. The Board typically meets six times a year and makes appointments for the following Committees:

Committees and Groups focused on Internal Aspects of the Conference

Annual Gathering & Meeting Planning Team

This group facilitates the planning of our Penn West Conference Annual Gathering & Meeting, including all worship, programmatic, and business aspects. The Assistant Moderator is the chairperson of the Committee. This group usually meets around six times a year. Conveners: Tom Croner & June Boutwell; Members: Donna Jarrell, Jim O’Connor, TJ Lucas, Lisa Griffin, Stephen Fair, Diane Wiley, Cathy Bowser

Association Presidents

This group of presidents of our six Associations seeks to live out our shared sense of mission by connecting on shared points of interest, such as an occasional All Association Meeting, within and among our Associations. The group usually meets quarterly, sometimes via conference call. Convener: David Ackerman; Members: Mary Hendricks (J), Avis Specht (W), Doug Patterson (P), Jill Marie (C), Dina Johnson (LE), Joe Beer (S)

Conference Church and Ministry Committee

The chairpersons from the Association Committees regularly meet to review church and ministry practices, support and oversee the PWC Academy and Licensed ministry, and work to coordinate among Associations the policies and procedures for ministerial authorization. The Committee sponsors the annual Pastors’ Retreat and Pre-Lent Retreat. The committee meets about six times a year. Chairperson: Barry Fillman (C); Members: Jim Neatrou (J), Shirley Musick (W), Dave Mears (P), Joe Beer (S), Ericjon Thomas (LE)

Endowment Committee: The Committee provides oversight for the Conference Endowment Fund, including how funds are invested and how money is to be spent to meet the guidelines of the Endowment. The committee meets a few times annually. Chairperson: Tom Croner; Members: Mark Poole, Earl Mostoller, Deb Long, Henry Cook, Jim Neatrou

Mission Grants Committee

From the interest income of the Corman Fund and the Thomas Fund, along with monies from Neighbors in Need and Strengthen the Church, the Mission Grants Committee solicits mission applications and awards grants to local churches following the stipulations of the funds. The Committee consists of a representative of each Association. The committee meets a few times annually. Convener: David Ackerman; Members: Nancy Gleyze (P), Bruce Ashlock (S), Peggy Mortimer (C), Doug Satterlee (J), Bob McKie (W), Laddie Ohl (LE)

Nominating Committee

The Conference Nominations Committee is comprised of the Chairpersons of the Nominating Committees of each of the Associations. Responsibilities of this committee are spelled out in Article VIII of the Conference By-Laws. The Nominating Committee typically elects at appropriate times the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer, and Delegates to General Synod. The committee usually meets once or twice a year, often via conference call. Convener: David Ackerman; Members: Liddy Barlow (P), Sam Swick (C), Matt Deal (S), Mary Hendricks (J), Avis Specht (W), Alice Niebauer (LE)

Penn West Academy for Ministry

The Academy provides extensive theological and biblical studies, church history, practical theology and more to prepare persons for licensed ministry as well as personal growth. The program is four years and upon graduation and certification by an Association Church and Ministry Committee, the student may be commissioned as a Licensed Minister. More details can be found on the Conference website. There are four sessions annually, plus a refresher course that includes all licensed and commissioned ministers. Dean: Joseph Hedden; Faculty Members: George Kepple, Meredith Hutchison, David Longstreet, George Steffey

Personnel Committee - The Committee relates to the staff of the Conference and works to create a positive work climate, provides support for the staff and conducts staff evaluations. Members are appointed by the Board of Directors. The committee typically meets quarterly. Chairperson: Don McIlvaine; Members: Andra Snyder, Jim Neatrou, Betty Royer, Don McIlvaine, David Williams

Weber Committee – The Committee provides oversight of the use and care of the John Weber Memorial Site, created in memory of John Weber an itinerant minister in the 1700's who was influential in the establishment of several churches within the Conference. The 79 acre site located east of Youngwood includes a chapel, caretaker house, cemetery and pavilion with restrooms. It can be rented by churches and families for picnics. The group meets on an "as need" basis. Chairperson: Kris Long; Members: Bob Zufall, Deb Long

Ministry Teams – Anyone with a passion for the focus of a particular Team is invited to join!

Financial Stewards

Combining the work of a Finance Committee and Stewardship, the Financial Stewards prepare an annual Conference budget for the Board to recommend to the Annual Meeting and monitor the budget, finances and investments during the year. With workshops and resources, members also seek to provide inspiration, Biblical understanding and skills to guide churches and members to be faithful in their stewardship of God's gifts. They celebrate churches' OCWM gifts and the "5x5" churches at the Conference Annual Meetings. This team usually meets 3-4 times a year. Convener: Deb Long; Members: Earl Mostoller, Jim Neatrou, Brenda Haws, Linda Miller-Pretz, David Williams, Nancy Harclerode

Transformation and Renewal Team

The Team provides focus and purpose in our radically changing social and cultural environments using workshops and extended retreats to inspire and train pastors and lay leaders in congregational transformation and renewal. The goal is to be faithful and dynamic witnesses to God's Mission. The team typically meets 3-5 times a year. Convener: Meredith Hutchison; Members: Jim Neatrou, Cathy Bowser

Global Missions Team

The team works with Global Ministries to enhance our cooperation in missional work around the world. Our recent focus is on the Conference partnership with the North West Luzon Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. It is the hope of the Team to increase our awareness and knowledge

of mutual ministries with our Partners, create church-to-church partnerships and learn from our sisters and brothers how God is working through them. The team typically meets quarterly, but in 2019, we are planning a Mission Trip to the Northwest Luzon Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and as a result, are meeting quarterly by Zoom. Convener: Jodie Enterline; Members: Ryan Lucas, Mary Alice Lynn, Dick Seigfried, Eileen Seigfried, Keith Grimm, Nancy Gleyze, Jeanette Thomas

Justice & Witness Team

The Team's focus is on Justice & Witness Ministries in keeping with the work of the wider United Church of Christ. We focus on a variety of justice issues, including but not limited to: creation care, racial justice/white privilege, hunger/homelessness, the Middle East, mental illness, etc. The group generally meets quarterly. Convener: David Ackerman; Members: Alexa Smith, Linda Lawson, Jim Neatrou, Ron Pedersen, Julia Difiore, Ellen Sautter, Bonnie Kautz, Don Hammonds, TJ Lucas, Joshua Bridges-Emigh, Roxanne Tuinstra, Jim Neatrou,

Legacy Team

Our Legacy Team works with churches that are either in the closing process or are considering new ways of being in ministry in their communities. Using the "Living Legacy" resource from the United Church of Christ as a guide, our team aims to be of service to churches who need this kind of care at this point in their lives. The team meets on an "as need" basis. Convener: David Ackerman; Members: George Kepple, Bob McKie, Jim Neatrou, Earl Mostoller, Joel Pretz, Linda Miller-Pretz, Lois Morrison, Scott Fuller

Campaign Team

We have recently established a team to help with the campaign that our Conference Board is undertaking that involves both the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance and our own Mission Grants program. The team meets roughly quarterly. Members: Liddy Barlow, Diane Fox, Diane Wiley

Associate for Youth Ministry Team

This team is currently working with and seeking to provide support and accountability for our Associate for Youth Ministry. The team meets roughly quarterly. Members: Jay Shaffer, Wendy Bigelow, Shirley Musick, Julia Difiore, Mary Alice Lynn

Open & Affirming Team

Our Open & Affirming Team aims to work for justice for LGBTQI persons in the justice-seeking tradition of the United Church of Christ. We have been working on "Building an Inclusive Church" and becoming a constructive resource for local churches who are working on LGBTQI issues in their communities. More recently, the group has transformed into CELAH (Christ's Extravagant Love and Hospitality), which works in cooperation with our Justice & Witness Team. The group typically currently meets on an "as need" basis. Convener: TBA; Members: Julia Difiore, Bob McKie, Joy Johnson, Rich McCarty, Chad Tanaka Pack, Rachel Cole Turner, Lisa Griffin, Donna Saylor, Ron Pedersen

AGM Bookstore/Educational Resources

The following people are providing leadership either in terms of the bookstore at the Annual Gathering & Meeting and/or in terms of UCC educational resources: Diane Nugent, Nancy Gleyze, Mary Alice Lynn, June Boutwell, Valarie Poole, Eileen Schmidt, Chelsea Neatrou

If you'd like to join one of our Ministry Teams, please see either the convener of the team or David Ackerman.