



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
HARRISBURG AREA – SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE

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April 28, 2020

Dear Lay and Clergy Members of the Annual Conference,

Grace to you in the name of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, Healer of our Brokenness, and Hope of our World!

In consultation with the Cabinet and the Sessions Committee, I have approved the rescheduling of **the 2020 Session of Annual Conference to Saturday, October 3, at the Williamsport Community Arts Center, 220 W. Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701.** We waited until now to officially make this decision because we had a contract with Hershey Lodge and faced penalties if we cancelled prematurely. With the State government's prohibition of a large gathering extended beyond the month of May, Hershey Lodge and our conference have mutually agreed that the May dates for Annual Conference will not work this year.

Clearly, we are in uncharted territory. Indeed, it is true that "we've never done it this way before." The October 3 session will be different from those we've held in the past. It will be an abbreviated annual conference later in the year than we have ever had it before. But for such a time as this, we must be flexible and open to doing things a new way.

Please give attention to the following information that will help you plan for this one-day session of the 2020 annual conference:

We will conduct only the business that is absolutely essential. The Agenda Committee is carefully crafting a schedule that will be as efficient as possible, so that in our limited timeframe we can accomplish what is absolutely required.

We will hold all submitted resolutions until the 2021 annual conference. All reports, except what is absolutely required to be acted upon this year, will be received in written form.

We regret that this year, we will not be able to hold all the special worship services that have blessed us in the past. **But be assured that we will find ways to recognize appropriately our retirees and those clergy, spouses, and lay members who have died since last we gathered.**

We are also working on rescheduling clergy session, in consultation with the cabinet and the executive committee of the Board of Ministry. We will share the new date and time as soon as we have confirmed the details.

The 2020 Annual Conference Session on October 3 will end with the Ordination/Commissioning Service.

By June 30, the Sessions and Agenda Committees will send out complete information regarding the day. You will receive instructions for when and where to register as well as a modified workbook that will contain only the business items and reports that we must act upon at session. All other reports and information will be posted online after Oct. 3.

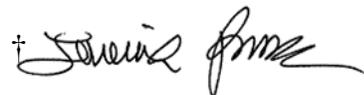
Please know that those already elected as members are the ones who should attend, and new Charge Conference elections are not warranted unless the member and alternate are not available.

Please also know that all decisions regarding Annual Conference and the Clergy Session are being made with the utmost regard for public safety and the health of all our participants. Particularly in this time, we all must recognize that things can change daily. We will continue to keep you apprised of decisions as they are made.

I give thanks for each of you and the creative ways that you are offering God's love to a hurting community. I am inspired by reports of your compassion and care, as well as your faithfulness and steadfastness. I know by your passion and perseverance that the mission of Jesus Christ continues.

Please know that the Sessions and Agenda Committees and the cabinet are diligently working to guide us into God's preferred future: a future with hope!

In Ministry With You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremiah Park", with a small cross symbol to the left of the first letter.

Jeremiah Park