

Hey all:

A blessed Happy New Year!

Last year's PNC Annual Meeting theme was "Out on a Limb" and challenged us all to try and stretch into a different way of being church. **At that meeting we announced that in 2017, one of the things we're going to try is doing Annual Meeting *itself* a little differently.**

Every year, there are few consistent comments and critiques we receive. There are always some folks who think we have too much time dedicated to business and others who think we have too much time dedicated to non-business agenda items. There are some who have found the costs of the meeting itself difficult; particularly the on sight meals and connected hotel. The quality of the food is usually coupled in with these concerns, too. There are always a few folks who ask why we don't have these gatherings at one of our camps instead of one of the other sites we've used. Again, these comments and questions have come up almost every year.

So, in 2017 we're going to try something different. **Instead of having one Annual Meeting, this year we're going to try having a one day business meeting in the spring at Pilgrim Firs and a fall retreat with educational opportunities and spiritual formation opportunities at N-Sid-Sen.** The spring meeting will be where all the official discernment work of the conference happens and will fulfill our bylaws requirements. This will be the one where local church delegates are invited to attend and authorized ministers are required to attend.

The fall gathering is still coming together but will be an opportunity for both widening your educational and spiritual horizons as well as time for sabbath. Everyone will be invited to this gathering but no one will be required to attend.

The costs will be less and we're looking at a variety of housing options within driving distance. Our camps do a good job adjusting to various dietary concerns and the quality of food is better than most of what is made in convention centers and hotels.

There will be challenges, too, of course. There are with every site. However the ability we'll have to adjust to those challenges will be more in our control at our own camps than a convention center. We're both excited and a little nervous about all the possibilities.

Registration materials for the spring meeting will be coming soon within the next week and a half. In the meantime, **save April 29th on your calendar for the spring business meeting.** If you are a delegate for your church or an authorized minister we encourage you to register early. **The date for the fall gathering will be September 30th.**

As we move into the coming days of planning and organizing, we ask for both your prayers and your patience!

Peace.
Mike

Rev. Michael Denton
Conference Minister
PNC-UCC