



Susquehanna Conference UMC
303 Mulberry Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050-3179
Phone: 717-766-7441
Website: www.susumc.org

April 2, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Friends in Ministry:

We are holding you close in our hearts and prayers as you provide leadership in these challenging and important days. Thank you for all the love you are extending to your people and your community. It makes a big difference in this crisis.

One thing we can do is to provide a hopeful horizon, especially for our young people, since so much is being cancelled right now in their lives. With this in mind, we are continuing full preparations for the ChangeMakers Immersion, which is scheduled for June 28 - July 2, 2020 at Wesley Forest.

ChangeMakers specifically focuses on an investment in our young people as valued leaders within the church and the wider society. Right now is a significant teachable moment in which we go deeper with our youth about what it means to be spiritual transformational leaders in all times and places. This is something we do together with you.

We are deeply aware of the impact of the COVID-19 Virus and its implications for our local churches. With this in mind, we are taking extra steps to collaborate with you:

- We will not compromise the health of the participants. We will follow the guidance of health authorities concerning gatherings. We will not hold the event if that is the guidance given in June. If gatherings are allowed, we will follow the Center of Disease Control's guidelines. We will make a final decision by June 1, 2020.
- We are asking congregations to identify up to three youth, ages 14-18, who show promise and gifts for long term leadership throughout their lives. This is one very intentional and powerful way for your church to say, "We see your gifts and want to support you in developing them as part of your life of faith with us." Once you have identified the young persons for this year, register them for ChangeMakers as an investment in their growth as leaders. **The registration fee will not be due until June 1, 2020, so there is no risk to registering. It is vital, however, to register your youth now, so we can prepare properly for the number of persons who will be attending, and the youth can add this to their calendars. Choose the "pay by check" option to delay payment until June 1, 2020.** Use this link for registration:
<https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ereg/newreg.php?eventid=529542>
- We are very sensitive to the reality that some congregations and families may be struggling financially, therefore, we are increasing scholarships for those who need them most. Contact Kim Shockley at kshockley@susumc.org or 717-766-7441 x 3604 for more information. We don't want any youth to be excluded due to financial reasons.
- **Also, we have reduced the cost from \$350/participant to \$150/participant through a generous grant from the Young Clergy Initiative and other donors.**
- If we cannot hold the event in person, we will devise online opportunities, please register now!

This is how important it is for us to affirm and support young leaders who will shape the church and the wider society in profound ways.



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Additional Information:

The goal of this immersion is to provide very intentional training and hands-on ways for youth to live out Christian Transformational Leadership through an initiative of their design. The process involves two vital dimensions – participation in ChangeMakers and a Covenant Relationship the young person has with their local community of faith and support. Having significant avenues for young people to move into actual leadership while they are young is indispensable if we hope to address the leadership needs of the church and society. Often these opportunities come way too late - other organizations see a young person's potential, energize them, engage them, and develop leadership as a high priority for the organization and the young person. Many of our young people would find meaning and a place to live out their leadership with their local faith community, if we offer comparable opportunities.

Enter a covenant with your young people to support them as they delve into and practice spiritual transformational leadership in their local community or congregation through a project that emerges from their own spiritual discernment of where God might utilize them to do good and to engage others with them. The ChangeMakers team of the Conference will provide coaching and support following the immersion in partnership with you as local churches.

Without a doubt, the best way to learn how to lead is to be given the opportunity to actually be in leadership. Please, see the attached ChangeMakers Covenant for details on cost and registration. For more information on the ChangeMakers Immersion, please contact Kim Shockley at kshockley@susumc.org or 717-766-7441 x 3604.

In Christian Service Together:

Kevin Witt - Director of Spiritual Transformational Leaders Team

Kim Shockley - Coordinator of Pathways of Spiritual Leadership

Kathy Kind - Altoona District Superintendent

*“Spiritual Transformation Leaders engage others in abundant Christian love
that transforms lives wherever they go!”*