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United Methodist Church Seeks to Expand Collaborative Ministries in Harrisburg

(December 5, 2018, Mechanicsburg, PA---) On Saturday, December 8, the Susquehanna United Methodist Conference, laid out our plan to open unified multisite campuses throughout the City of Harrisburg. To do that, we need to consolidate our ten existing churches in the city.

“This is an initiative to dream bigger than any current individual congregation. This is an opportunity for each church to assess their congregation’s ministry potential and to unlock resources through our connection with and through one another. This is the time to apply adaptive solutions and design thinking in order to be faithful in reaching new and more diverse people in new ways in Harrisburg for Christ. People from the ten participating churches will have the opportunity to collaborate together in order to be a greater witness in and around Harrisburg”, Rev. Barry Robison, Harrisburg District Superintendent.

With the vision of having our churches reflect the community around them we plan to build a God sized impact in the City of Harrisburg. Working in collaboration with community leaders and organizations to resource neighborhoods, provide connection, and develop faith-based encouragement throughout the city, we will leave a lasting imprint.

We are exploring several potential sites in Downtown, Uptown, Midtown, Penbrook, and Allison Hill for our new campuses. These multisite unified faith communities in the city, will strive toward inclusivity in our churches. We will implement an intentionally diverse, driven, and community focused pastoral and leadership team to spearhead these new missions. This team will work together to form cohesive and neighborhood focused congregations. These congregations will not only be worshipping on Sunday mornings but also engaging, connecting, and embedding themselves in the community throughout the week. Working toward being part of the lives of the people in those immediate areas and not just weekly visitors.

These churches have been a part of the city landscape for years, they have served their congregations and families well, but now it is time to serve the community. By recommendation of the Impact Harrisburg task force of the Susquehanna Conference, as of April 22, 2019, Derry Street UMC, First Harrisburg UMC, Grace Penbrook UMC, Riverside UMC, Rockville UMC, St. Mark’s UMC, and Trinity Penbrook UMC, will all be under the direction and leadership of the Susquehanna Conference Board of Trustees. Special discernment and consideration will be given to Camp Curtin Memorial Mitchell UMC and Grace Harrisburg UMC due to the historical nature of these buildings.

We are working with community organizations and leaders to maintain that vital ministries will continue to operate during this time of transition.

Kay Kotan
Director of Equipping Vital Congregations

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