

**Penn West Conference  
Legacy Team Report, 2023-2024**

The Legacy Team is a group of people from our Conference who have gathered together to support local congregations in the Conference who are considering closure or who are in the process of closing. In recent years, our team has given assistance to churches like First, Pitcairn, which closed in 2017; St. Thomas, Shelocta, which closed in 2019; and Birmingham, Pittsburgh, which closed in 2021. We have also been assisting the following churches that are currently in the process of closing:

Calvary, Turtle Creek  
Redeemer, Ellerslie MD  
First, Apollo  
St. John's, Corriganville MD  
Grace, Duquesne  
Grace, Altoona  
Allegheny Open Arms, Pittsburgh

Please pray for them and for all churches that are in this tender time in their lives.

Some other items that the Legacy Team attends to include the following:

1. Leading a visioning/discerning process with a congregation trying to decide its future.
2. Consulting with a church that has serious building and financial concerns.
3. Working closely with a church offering pastoral care, emotional support, and guidance in the process toward church closure.
4. Participation in the church closing service.
5. Attending webinars from the national setting.

I believe that it is truly important to celebrate the gifts that our closing local churches have left to their communities, to the wider church, and to the world. Our hearts ache for congregations that have reached this point in their lives. We are mindful of the fact that none of the churches founded by the Apostle Paul are still in existence today. But even though there are times when certain church communities die, the church lives on, and God calls us to be ever attentive to the new life God gives us.

Our Legacy Team has become more active lately, so if a member of the team calls on you as a leader in one of the churches that is in the process of closing, please don't be surprised and please receive their support. Many thanks to the members of our Legacy Team, which currently include the Rev. Linda Miller-Pretz, Joel Pretz, the Rev. Lois Morrison, George Kepple, the Rev. Scott Fuller, Tom Croner, the Rev. Diane Wiley, and the Rev. Jim Neatrou. If you'd like to join this important team in our Conference, please see me. God's blessings be with you all!

Respectfully submitted,  
David Ackerman