About this Colloquy

In the last decade of the Cold War and the years following the „Peaceful revolution" of 1989, regional church partnerships where established between UCC-Conferences in the USA and regional churches in Germany, including then East Germany. Among these were the partnerships between the Penn Central Conference (PCC) and the Evangelical Church in Berlin-Brandenburg (PCC) and the Wisconsin Conference and the Ev. Church of Upper Lusatia on the eastern border of Germany with Poland and Czechia.

Both German churches merged in 2004 and became the EKBO, which took up the tradition of joint Pastoral Colloquys that had been established between the EKiBB and the PCC in the 1990s.

Since then, biennial colloquys have taken place and addressed issues of mutual concern. Other neighbor and partner conferences were invited and included.

In addition the PCC had a relationship with the Church of The Rhineland, and the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference had a relationship with the Evangelical Church in Anhalt, Germany.

With the combination of the four Pennsylvania conferences into a Keystone Conference in 2026, we expand our relationships, inviting all German Partners, and US members of all Keystone to this colloquy held in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

We hope to deepen existing relationships, spark new ones, and spend time increasing our ability to be the church in a very divided world. We hope you will be able to join us, for this time of study and fellowship!

German-American Colloquy 2026:
Church as Witness in a Divided World

Sunday, July 26 (afternoon) – Friday, July 31, 2024 (noon)



Sponsors:

Keystone Conference, United Church of Christ
UEK Forum, United Church of Christ

Summary:

Our world is experiencing significant division and upheaval, and return to authoritarian government throughout the world is discouraging to those who are familiar with the legacy of such government in the past.

What do we as church do about it? How do we maintain as witnesses of Jesus, who taught us to love one another, even those who are prodigal, even the enemy? How do we deal with divides even in our congregations, and maintain our love and our witness?

This colloquy seeks to look at the problem, from several points of view – discussing how to address controversial issues in churches which may not be united about them, and studying the Book of Revelation for insight. We will also involving our Next Generation cohort, which worked with the Church of the Rhineland in 2024 and 2025, attending to the issues of Christian Nationalism and their witness from those events. We will look at how the UCC addresses witness within the United States, and in our international relationships, and will explore how the church has been witness on both sides of the Atlantic.

Speakers include:

Rev. Dr. Leah Schade, our primary speaker, is the Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary in, Kentucky. She is director of a Wabash Grant exploring the use of deliberative dialogue in congregations and in theological education. The author of books on preaching, including controversial issues, and especially creation justice issues, she is the EcoPreacher blogger on Patheos.

Rev. Dr. Greg Carey is the Associate Dean for the Lancaster campus of Moravian University School of theology. He has recently written on the book of Revelation.

Rev. Peter Makhari – Minister and Team Leader for Global Ministries Programs and Global Relations Minister (Middle East and Europe) of the Global Ministries Team, UCC and DoC

Rev. Michael Neuroth- Director - Office of Public Policy and Advocacy in Washington, DC, United Church of Christ

Information

Who? Pastors and local church lay leaders.

What? A week of learning, discussion and fellowship.

Where? Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

When? Sunday, July 26 (afternoon) – Friday, July 31, 2026

Language? English

Attendance fee? $735 per person single, $685 double occupancy. Includes lodging and meals (except dinner Wednesday) There is also a $310 option for commuters. Registration Link will be up in January.

What more?

We hope our Geman friends will join us for weekend visits before or after the colloquy in the homes of UCC members throughout Pennsylvania. Juniata College is in the center of the State of Pennsylvania, with State College the closest airport and an Amtrak station 2 km from the campus. (1 train per day from New York, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, or Pittsburgh.)

More information? Registration?

Registration link, and speaker bios: https://keystoneconference.regfox.com/german-american-colloguy-2026-church-as-witness-in-a-divided-world Payment via credit card is directly supported, as are offline checks. If you need a different method of payment, contact julie@bvfof.org.