



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Redemption and restoration are foundational beliefs for Christians. No one should forever be labeled by and punished for the mistakes of their past.

—Rev. Sandra L. Strauss
Director of Advocacy & Ecumenical Outreach,

The **Pennsylvania Council of Churches** is 43 church bodies and agencies representing 20 Anabaptist, Anglican, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Protestant communions in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania working together for Christian unity for the sake of the world.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, shares God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice.

Pennsylvania Council of Churches
900 S. Arlington Avenue, Suite 211A
Harrisburg, PA 17109-5024



Faithful Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform:

Principles and Practice

April 15/April 16, 2018

Lancaster Theological Seminary
Hafer Center (above the library)
555 West James Street
Lancaster, PA 17603

A joint program sponsored by:

**Pennsylvania
Council
of Churches**



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Tentative Schedule

Sunday, April 15

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| 1:30-1:45 pm | Setting the stage |
| 1:45-2:15 pm | Why this seminar/Why we do advocacy—scriptural/theological basis with specific emphasis on the Anabaptist perspective |
| 2:15-3:45 pm | What do we need to know about the US prison system and restorative justice? What do we need to know about Clean Slate legislation? |
| 3:45-4:00 pm | Break |
| 4:00-5:15 pm | PA governing structure/"nuts and bolts" of advocacy: How do we make our case for Clean Slate with elected officials? |
| 5:15-5:30 pm | Wrap-up and instructions for advocacy meetings. |

Monday, April 16

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| 9:00 am* | Team preparation and legislative visits |
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*Tentatively, advocacy teams will meet at 9:00 am to prepare for meetings with legislators/staff by district. Actual meeting times are subject to legislator/staff availability, but planners will strive to schedule meetings on Monday morning.

For more information:

Contact the Pennsylvania Council of Churches at (717) 545-4761 or send e-mail to s.strauss@pachurches.org.

Why Clean Slate is Needed

Formerly incarcerated persons face a myriad of barriers as they attempt to reenter society. Lack of access to housing, education, training, job opportunities, and public benefits have created conditions that make successful reentry into community nearly impossible for millions of our neighbors who have served time in prison. These obstacles essentially deny them the opportunity to become the kind of engaged, responsible citizens we claim to desire.

Society's failure to remove or reduce these barriers means that approximately two-thirds of all who are released from prison are rearrested within three years, and approximately 75 percent are rearrested within five years. (<https://www.nij.gov/topics/corrections/recidivism/Pages/welcome.aspx>)

Pennsylvania is no exception, but newly proposed legislation aims to help. "Clean Slate" (PA Senate Bill 529/House Bill 1419) is bipartisan legislation that would automatically seal from public uses the records of persons with minor, non-violent misdemeanor convictions if they have remained conviction free for at least 10 years, as well as records on arrests that do not lead to convictions.

People of faith from all points on the theological spectrum are supporting this legislation that will permit returning citizens to return as full citizens—as those who have shown rehabilitation by remaining conviction free will be able to find better employment, housing, and educational services.

Why You Should Attend

Come to this program to learn why, as people of faith, we engage in advocacy—in broad terms, but with emphasis on why from an Anabaptist perspective. Come to learn more about this important legislation and why it is so important that people of faith support a bill that opens doors for our brothers and sisters who have served time. Come to learn how Pennsylvania governing structures work, and how to engage with your legislators and policy makers to support "Clean Slate." Then join with your neighbors to visit your Representatives to make the case for its passage.

Registration

Please complete, clip and mail or fax this registration information to the Pennsylvania Council of Churches **BY APRIL 12**. You may also register online at www.pachurchesadvocacy.org.

Please print

First Name _____		Last Name _____	
Title (Rev., etc.) _____		Position _____	
Address 1 _____			
Address 2 _____			
City _____		State _____	Zip _____
E-mail _____			
Phone (best number to reach you—please include area code) _____			
Name as you wish it to appear on name badge _____			
Pennsylvania legislative districts (list district number & name) _____			
Representative: _____			
Senator: _____			
If unknown, find your legislators at http://www.legis.state.pa.us .			
I WILL participate in legislative visits on October 2 <input type="checkbox"/>			

You may pay by check or credit card.

By check: Please include \$20 check payable to **Pennsylvania Council of Churches** and send to:

Pennsylvania Council of Churches
ATTN: Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform
900 S. Arlington Avenue, Suite 211A
Harrisburg, PA 17109-5024

By credit card: Follow payment link from online registration form; click on link under "Events" at www.pachurches.org.