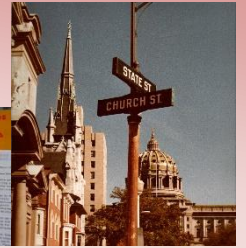




# Pennsylvania Council of Churches Ministry of Public Advocacy



## News and Action Summary for February 24, 2023

### **Empowering people of faith to make a difference for the common good!**

Taking a point of personal privilege, I want to let you know that this will be my final News and Action Summary as my retirement begins on March 1. It has been a joy and a blessing to serve you in the role of advocate for the Pennsylvania Council of Churches for nearly 19 years. While it's the end of my compensated service in this role, it is the beginning of a new chapter. I plan to take some time to rest and reflect, but intend to continue to advocate personally and with organizations I support for the laws and policies that are important to me, write, take on some volunteer activities, and return to spend lots of time in my long-neglected garden! Travel will be on the agenda as well. I also hope to stay in touch with many of you who have been so important to me during my tenure here. If you would like to connect, please feel free to drop me a note at [wombat2pa@gmail.com](mailto:wombat2pa@gmail.com) (and I'll be happy to explain that address if you do!). And THANK YOU for your faithful advocacy! (Rev. Sandy Strauss, editor)

**Today marks the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, with no end in sight.** The Ukrainian people have remained resilient and have held their own in a war that has been marked by atrocities and crimes against humanity by the Russian forces. **We continue to support and pray for the Ukrainian people and leaders that have showed remarkable courage and resolve.**



It has now been three weeks since the train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio (just a stone's throw from the Pennsylvania border) and the release and burning of toxic chemicals. Despite numerous reports of dead fish, livestock, and pets, respiratory issues and burning skin and skin rashes, many questions remain about toxic exposure and how and why this kind of accident could happen. Norfolk Southern bears responsibility for its failure to update its safety standards in an effort to prevent what happened—and in fact, should be made to answer for fighting to roll back standards under the previous administration. **We encourage you to tell your member of Congress and our Senators to work to hold them responsible and improve safety standards for the rail industry.**

We continue to note and celebrate **Black History Month**, and we urge you to [Honor Black History Month—Act to Demand Justice and Reparations](#). You can also [Sign Faith Leader Letter Asking President Biden to Act on Reparations](#).

**We hope you will support this ministry with a generous gift, or even better a monthly gift. You can help us by going to <https://pachurches.org/shop/> where you will find our address and links to make your donation. If you want to support advocacy, scroll down the page to find the links for Public Witness Ministry.**

Here's some "News You Can Use":

- [SNAP Emergency Allotments Will End in February](#)
- [Home Energy Assistance Program Open](#)

Many actions are available, and you can learn more in the articles below.

If you are interested in any programs that would help you to gain greater understanding and ability to be an effective advocate, contact Sandy Strauss at [s.strauss@pachurches.org](mailto:s.strauss@pachurches.org).

To learn about how to keep informed between these updates, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org>. As usual, we understand that there is a lot of information here and in the links provided for further information. **Please know that you aren't expected to act on everything! Just choose the issues that are most important to you and do something!** Sometimes you will be directed to action pages of other organizations—**don't worry!** These are organizations that we work with regularly and who share a common interest.

**Please consider contacting your legislators to thank them when they support your position as well, or to express your disappointment when they don't.** We don't follow up with them often enough. They need our feedback to understand how we feel. Go to <https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5415/getLocal4.jsp> to find a summary of your federal and state legislators with basic contact information.

Our [website](#) is updated regularly. If there is something you would really like to see that isn't there, please contact us at [s.strauss@pachurches.org](mailto:s.strauss@pachurches.org).

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### **URGENT ACTIONS**

If you don't have time for any other actions, please consider taking action on these issues!

[Tell the PA Legislature to Adopt Proposed New Rules](#)

[Tell Congress to Expand the Child Tax Credit Now](#)

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### **NEW ACTIONS**

[Tell Congress to Fund Universal School Meals Now](#)—NEW

[Sign On to Support Healthy School Meals](#)—NEW

[Sign Open Letter to POTUS, Congress Demanding Action on Voting Rights, Living Wages, Rural Economic Investment](#)—NEW

[Tell Your PA Legislators It's Time to Invest in PA Public Schools](#)—NEW

[Tell Your PA Representative to Protect Pennsylvania's Critical Wildlife Habitat](#)—NEW

[Sign Petition to Urge EPA to Cut Methane Pollution and Protect the Climate](#)—NEW

[Tell the Administration to Keep Us Safe from Hazardous Chemical Trains](#)—NEW

[Tell Your PA Legislators to Pass Lost and Stolen Gun Reporting Legislation](#)—NEW

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### **ONGOING ACTIONS**

[Sign Faith Leader Letter Asking President Biden to Act on Reparations](#)

[Honor Black History Month—Act to Demand Justice and Reparations](#)

[Tell Your PA Lawmakers to Stop Attempt to Rewrite PA Constitution](#)

[Tell Speaker Rozzi to Work to Reform Pennsylvania's Flawed Constitutional Amendment Process](#)

[Tell Congress to Pass Paid Family and Medical Leave Now](#)

[Tell Congress to Tackle the Affordable Housing Crisis and Protect Renters](#)

[Tell the President to Demand a Clean Debt Ceiling Increase with No Cuts to Social Security or Medicare](#)

[Tell the President No Tax Breaks to Wealthy Corporations Without Investments in Children and Families](#)

[Tell PA Lawmakers to Fix PA's Unconstitutional School Funding System](#)

[Tell Your PA Legislators to Make Funding Our Public Schools a Priority](#)

[Tell the Governor to Grow Access to High Quality Pre-K, Child Care, and More](#)

[Tell the EPA to Set Stronger Standards for Soot Pollution](#)

[Call on Speaker Rozzi to Prioritize Gun Violence Prevention](#)

[Tell Congress to Pass Citizenship Legislation for DREAMers Now](#)

[Tell Congress to Expand Insulin Copay to All Americans](#)

[Urge Your State Representative to Cosponsor Extreme Risk Protection Order Legislation](#)

[Tell Our Senators to Vote for Assault Weapons Ban](#)

[Help Shape Bureau of Prisons Rule on Inmate Financial Responsibility Program](#)—till March 10

[Tell PA Elected Officials to Fix Harrisburg with New Rules Package](#)

[Tell Congress to Pass the CLEAN Act and Commit to More Accountability in Government](#)

[Sign Now to Tell Congress to Pass the DISCLOSE Act and Overturn Citizens United](#)

[Tell Congress to Pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act Now](#)

[Tell Congress to Pass the Equality Act](#)

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### **IMPORTANT AND TIME SENSITIVE NEWS!**

[So Much Happening: Here's How You Can Keep Informed Between Updates](#)

[Summary of All News Posts Since Previous Update](#)

[Lenten Values: Spring Into Action—A Resource on Immigration Justice](#)

[Spring 2023 Holy Days and Holidays Toolkit](#)

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### **EVENTS**

**For a full monthly calendar of events**, see the Events page at <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/events/>.

**For a listing with descriptions of events**, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/events/list/>.

**For general information about our calendar, links to ongoing events, and how to submit events**, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/events/about-our-calendar/>.

Ongoing/upcoming events:

[Civics 9-1-1](#)—Carlisle, 3 Events (3/21, 3/30, 4/4)

[Just Creation Conference: Shalom for Our Common Home](#)—March 16-18, Decatur, GA

[Living the Golden Rule: Faith Climate Action Week 2023](#)—April 14-23, 2023—Organizer's Kit now available

[Ecumenical Advocacy Days: Swords Into Plowshares](#)—April 25-27

[Caring for Creation with PA IPL](#)—First Fridays, October 2022-June 2023

[Moral Mondays—Sign Up for Notifications](#)

[Freedom Church of the Poor](#)—Sundays 6-7:30

Events in the coming weeks:

[Save Money AND the Environment: Learn about Tax Benefits from the Inflation Reduction Act](#)—February 28

[March for Our Lives PA Advocacy](#)—March 23, Harrisburg

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## **OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES TO LEARN AND ACT**

For postings since the previous Summary...

[Resources](#)

[Opportunities](#)

[Jobs, internships and fellowships](#)

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## **NEWS POSTS**

Visit our [weblog](#) for the latest news and information. For previous News Summaries, go to <http://www.pachurchesadvocacy.org/news-summary/news-summary-archive/>. Also, check out specific issue-related posts by clicking on links on the right side of the page.

Subscribe to our weblog via e-mail (see link at bottom of [home page](#)).

**[Summary of most recent News Posts.](#)**

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## **SUPPORT THE COUNCIL'S ADVOCACY WORK**

**Find us on Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/PACHurchesAdvocacy>.

**Follow us on Twitter** at <http://twitter.com/pachrchadvocacy>.

**Follow us on Instagram** at <https://www.instagram.com/pachurchadvocacy/>.

**Subscribe to our YouTube channel** at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCunqnFIOcrIn\\_o715zhlTIA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCunqnFIOcrIn_o715zhlTIA).

If you received this message from a friend, **sign up for Pennsylvania Council of Churches Advocacy e-mails** at [http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5415/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup\\_page\\_KEY=531](http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5415/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KEY=531).

**Financial support for the Council's Advocacy Ministry is always welcome!** Go to our online support page at <https://www.pachurches.org/shop/> and look for "Public Advocacy Donation."

And finally...**PLEASE FORWARD THIS E-MAIL!**

**Empowering people of faith to make a difference for the common good!**