

Cooman, Kevin

From: Cooman, Kevin
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2022 9:05 AM
To: pmunyorg@gmail.com
Subject: PMUNY programs and participation - EMP response

Dear Joyce - I wanted to get back to you to let you know the outcome of our EMP Board meeting on Monday about the question you raised about PMUNY programs and participation. After a thoughtful discussion, and review of the delivery of services by PEM at Advent House, and EMP through its four sponsored ministries, the Board reached the following conclusion.

The Certificates of Incorporation and Bylaws of PEM and EMP make clear that they emanate from the commitment of the member Christian churches to “support and strengthen Christian ministries in conformity with Christian ethical and moral teachings.” It is because of that Christian commitment to “love your neighbors as yourselves” (Mark 12:30-31) that all of the PEM and EMP ministries provide services to clients *irrespective* of a client’s personal faith—or lack of it. There are no professions of faith required to become a resident at Advent House, or to be a recipient of financial assistance from the Fairport Good Neighbor Fund, or to be directed to help for mental health by STS-ROC, or to obtain a house from the Habitat builders. Moreover, the volunteers who provide services through PEM and EMP ministries come from an ecumenical range of Christian churches (*e.g.*, Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal etc.) and inter-faith communities (*e.g.*, Jewish congregations).

PMUNY's decision to offer not only Christian-based spiritual programs (like Residents Encounter Christ), but also a religion-neutral assistance program for inmates (like Houses of Hope), is an internal matter for PMUNY leadership decision making. If PMUNY finds this to be consistent with its vision and mission, then the EMP Board sees no conflict in PMUNY providing services to inmates via the Houses of Hope program, using volunteers from different faith communities working together.

I hope this provides you with the sense of the EMP board in response to your question. Thanks for your continued leadership of this important ministry.

For the EMP Board,

Kevin

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