

# Presbytery of Redstone

## eNews

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#### Let's Pray For:

>Newlonsburg  
Presbyterian Church,  
Murrysville, Curtis Paul,  
Pastor; Marnie Silbert,  
Associate Pastor  
District 1

>Union Presbyterian  
Church, Murrysville,  
Derek Campbell, Pastor  
District 1

>Community United  
Presbyterian Church,  
New Alexandria, Grafton  
Eliason, Interim Pastor  
District 1

>United Presbyterian  
Church, West Newton,  
John Manon, Pastor  
District 2

>Derry Presbyterian  
Church, Marnie Russell,  
Stated Supply

August 23, 2017

### Upcoming Events...

August 26, 2017 - Peach Fest and Bake Sale - New Salem Presbyterian Church  
August 26, 2017 - Steel City Quartet Concert - North Huntingdon, New Hope  
August 26, 2017 - Peach Festival - West Newton, Sewickley United  
August 31, 2017 - Overdose Ends Now! - St. Clair Park, Greensburg  
September 9, 2017 - IPLF Fall Workshops - Greensburg, Maplewood

Please go to the website at [www.redstone.org](http://www.redstone.org) and click on the "events" tab for more information on any of the upcoming events.

### "A Present Witness" - Reflections - from Skip Noftzger, Executive Presbyter, Redstone Presbytery

*"The church confesses its faith when it bears a present witness to God's grace in Jesus Christ."* (Preface, The Confession of 1967)

For many of us, we have promised to be led and instructed by our confessions as reliable expositions of the Scriptures concerning what we are to believe and do. So, we benefit by the wisdom and insight of such traditional commentary grounding and leading us to the God's revelation. Out of the collection of confessions that we affirm, there is one that is identified with the year of its enactment(1967).

Although I am old enough to remember, fifty years may seem a long time ago. In 1967, the Supreme Court declared all state laws prohibiting interracial marriage unconstitutional. Thurgood Marshall was nominated as the first African American to that court. Yet, there were also numerous incidents and protests grounded in issues of race throughout various cities across the country.

So, on second thought, maybe fifty years it is not nearly as distant as it might appear. We might have "assumed" that race was no longer an "issue," but we are confronted with the realities that racism and its effects still persists among

**District 2**

>First Presbyterian Church, Greensburg, Martin Ankrum, Pastor; Nicole Atkinson, Assoc. Pastor

**District 2**

>Springhill Furnace Presbyterian Church, Lake Lynn, Joey Hickok, Pastor

**District 3**

>Leisenring Presbyterian Church, Rick Watson, Commissioned Ruling Elder

**District 3**

>First Presbyterian Church, Masontown, David Stewart, Commissioned Ruling Elder

**District 3**

>Revloc Presbyterian Church, David O'Hara, Commissioned Ruling Elder

**District 4**

>First Presbyterian Church, Windber, Jim Farrer, Stated Supply

**District 4**

>Bolivar Presbyterian Church, James Sunseri, Commissioned Ruling Elder

us whether in unconscious everyday practices, or embedded in our systems that we take for granted or now, openly as ideology under the cover of retaining "history."

It was in that similar context of 1967, that one confession spoke both for and to the Church and may do so again today. First, and foremost, the confession focused on the imperative of reconciliation as a defining characteristic of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God's reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and shares God's labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Unsurprisingly, in noting that God's reconciling work in Jesus Christ and the church's mission of reconciliation are the heart of the gospel in any age, fifty years later, that confession still rings true.

**In each time and place, there are particular problems and crises through which God calls the church to act. The church, guided by the Spirit, humbled by its own complicity and instructed by all attainable knowledge, seeks to discern the will of God and learn how to obey in these concrete situations....**

**God has created the peoples of the earth to be one universal family. In his reconciling love, God over comes the barriers between sisters and brothers and breaks down every form of discrimination based on racial or ethnic difference, real or imaginary.... Therefore, the church labors for the abolition of all racial discrimination and ministers to those injured by it. Congregations, individuals, or groups of Christians who exclude, dominate, or patronize others, however subtly, resist the Spirit of God and bring contempt on the faith which they profess .**

So, regardless of our agreement or not about particular tactics, whether in counter protest or prophetic proclamation or neighborly activity, do not let that detract us from the foundational affirmation of the image of God in all people and profess the reconciling message of the gospel. Silence is not an option. The question for all of us (whether in 1967 and 2017); those who have been entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and who share in God's mission and labor, will we be a "present witness?" Wherever we are, may we be that present witness to the reconciling love and justice of Jesus the Christ.

## Around Redstone

>>**In the wake of a weekend of violence in Charlottesville, Virginia fomented by the "alt-right," four top leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) today issued a statement condemning white supremacy and racism. The leaders - General Assembly co-moderators Jan Edmiston and T. Denise Anderson, Presbyterian Mission Agency Interim Executive Director Tony De La Rosa, and**

**District 4****Contact Us****Rev. Skip Noftzger**

Executive  
Presbyter/Stated  
Clerk

blog address

twitter address

**Bobbie Martin**

Office Administrator/  
Bookkeeper

***Communicate  
the Word...******Carry on the  
Work...******Change the  
World...******Together*****Office Hours  
for 2017****The Presbytery  
Office Hours are:**

Monday through  
Thursday  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00  
p.m.

CLOSED on Friday

General Assembly Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson, II -- praised the "faithful witness" of church leaders, especially those in Charlottesville, and acknowledged that "Scripture has been misused to justify white supremacy and racism." The statement further declares that "White supremacy and racism stand in stark, irreconcilable contradiction to God's intention for humanity" and acknowledges the church's historic complicity in systemic racism in the U.S. And the leaders commit the church to "stand against, speak against and work against racism and white supremacy, this day and every day." To read more [click here](#).

>>Board of Pensions offers The Transition-to-College Grant (TCAG) program that has assisted qualified members since 2007. Although assisting with the full cost of a college education is beyond the scope of the Assistance Program, the Board of Pensions has initiated this program to help mitigate transitional expenses. Through the TCAG program, the plan member parent of a college freshman covered under the Board's Medical Plan can receive assistance to help defray significant one-time expenses, such as the purchase of a computer, dorm room furnishings, and the like. [Click here](#) for more information.

>>IPLF workshops to be offered at Maplewood Presbyterian Church on Saturday, September 9, 2017. Workshops include Pastoral Care Ministry, led by the Rev. Ron Durika, Associate Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Irwin and Church Leadership led by the Rev. Craig Miller, Pastor of the Westmont Presbyterian Church in Johnstown. IPLF is a joint program for education, enrichment, and training for Ruling and Teaching Elders. Presbyteries involved include: Redstone, Washington, Upper Ohio Valley, and Kiski. See [the flyer](#) at the Presbytery website.

>> The Synod of the Trinity will be celebrating its 300th anniversary on September 17, 2017. It was on this date in 1717 that the first synod meeting in the United States was held in Philadelphia, making this day the 300<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Synod of the Trinity. The [bulletin insert](#) includes a liturgy and hymn suggestions that can be used on this day.

>>Employers Begin Selecting 2017 Benefits - Benefits Connect is now available for employers to review, model and/or update their Employer Agreements for 2018 benefits selections. The deadline for employers to submit Employer Agreements for 2018 is October 13 - two weeks later than last year. Annual enrollment for members will be October 30-November 17. Employers who have questions about the Benefits Plan or annual enrollment should call the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

**The Resource  
Center Hours are:**  
Tuesday through  
Thursday  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00  
p.m.  
CLOSED on Monday  
and Friday

>>The 2017/2019 Book of Order is now available and we will be doing a bulk order. In order to get yours at a discounted price you will need to complete [the attached form](#) and return it to the Presbytery office either via snail mail at Redstone Presbytery, 1004 Mt. Pleasant Road, Greensburg, PA 15601 or via email at [secretary@redstonepresbytery.org](mailto:secretary@redstonepresbytery.org). The deadline for orders will be Wednesday, September 6, 2017. The books will be available for pickup at the Presbytery office approximately two weeks after this date. Arrangements can also be made to have them picked up at the September Presbytery meeting (9/23/17 - Pine Springs Camp) provided they have arrived at the Presbytery office in time for bundling and that someone will be assured to be attending that meeting.



Presbytery of Redstone | 1004 Mt. Pleasant Road | Greensburg | PA | 15601