

Presbytery of Redstone

eNews

In This Issue

Reflections

Around Redstone

Let's Pray For:

>Poke Run Presbyterian Church, Apollo, Pete Goetschius, Pastor District 1

>First Presbyterian Church, Avonmore, Larry Armstrong, Stated Supply District 1

>West Hempfield Presbyterian Church, Irwin, Peggy Shannon, Interim Pastor District 2

>First Presbyterian Church, Jeannette, Robert Fuehrer, Pastor District 2

>Calvin Presbyterian Church, Scottdale, Leonard Morgan,

October 11, 2017

Upcoming Events...

October 15, 2017 - S'Mores and More Lunch - New Alexandria, Community
 October 29, 2017 - District 3 Reformation Worship - Uniontown, Third
 November 5 - "Into the Light" Candlelight Service - Delmont
 November 7 - Election Day Lunch - New Alexandria, Community

Please go to the website at www.redstone.org and click on the "events" tab for more information on any of the upcoming events.

Reflections - from Skip Noftzger, EP, Redstone Presbytery

Pray First, Listen Second, Speak Third

The news breaks forth upon us. Even as we were becoming overwhelmed with the disruption of life caused by hurricanes, the news of an act of mass violence in the shootings in Las Vegas comes across our screens and our consciousness. One tragedy after another strikes our nation, our people, our souls. At first, dumbfounded by our own helplessness, we might not know how to respond. Then, we might succumb to the temptation to react, seizing the moment for our pent-up frustrations and our ongoing conflicts.

Unlike the "days of old" when no one might listen to me, all of us have our own platforms available through social media applications. While these tools may be used to express grief, to offer consolation and elicit prayer support, many postings quickly deteriorated in tone and content, reflecting our desires to speak loudly. Of course, our audience of "friends" are mainly those people who already agree with us on most things (with the exception of a few trolls). Tempting as it was, I managed to resist the urge to "enlighten" the world (or at least my FB friends) with not only the causes of such tragedies, but their

**Commissioned Ruling
Elder
District 3**

**>Grace Chapel
Presbyterian Church,
Smithfield, Lee
McDermott, Pastor
District 3**

**>First Presbyterian
Church, Ebensburg, Alice
Tondora, Moderator
District 4**

**>Bethany Presbyterian
Church, Johnstown,
Denise Todero,
Commissioned Ruling
Elder
District 4**

Contact Us

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Executive
Presbyter/Stated
Clerk
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[twitter address](#)

Bobbie Martin
Office Administrator/
Bookkeeper

Communicate the Word...

solutions. It is not that I don't believe that various actions, policies or practices should be pursued, but if that is my first impulse, then the tragedy is being used for my own narrative. Rather, I once received the sage advice (which I confess I do not often follow), to pray first, listen second, and speak third.

Each is important, maybe even imperative. Although it takes all three actions, when we reverse the order we permit our own agendas to dominate our response. Not only does such a response threaten to calcify our existing differences and divisions, it also reflects our dependence upon our God may be much more profession than reality. In the midst of our own confusion, rage and frustration, our God is there. The Lord is big enough to hear our cries even borne out of anger or doubt and to offer grace and mercy in the middle of a world plagued by not only our sinfulness and that of others, but the effects of principalities and powers.

Yet, even as we cry out to our God together, calls for unity in the midst of tragedy will ring hollow if we are not willing to listen to one another. Listening must mean more than just waiting for our turn to speak, but really hearing the other person both in what they say and why they are saying it. It is in that strong activity, we not only express human empathy, but that humility begins to define us. For in acknowledging the other person, we realize and recognize not only our differences, but our commonality. We come together knowing that our God just might be at work in and through others as well even when they reach different conclusions.

In the end (last), we can and must speak. We must be faithful to the Lord even as salt and light in this world. In our speaking, we must speak with clarity, but admitting the complexity of the issues that confront us, where the path of obedience may not always be brightly lit. Seeking wherever possible, we speak together as one to a world which either will not acknowledge the Creator and Redeemer or safely puts that god away in a compartment to be retrieved when absolutely necessary.

By faith, let us act, but let us pray first, listen second, speak third.

Around Redstone

>>If you were unable to get in on the bulk order for the 2017/2019 Books of Order that were distributed at the September presbytery meeting, I will be doing another bulk order if I get enough orders to make it worthwhile. Call me at 724.837.6737 or email me at secretary@redstonepresbytery.org to let me know if you would like to order copies for your church at the discounted

Carry on the Work...

rate of \$9.50/book. The deadline will be November 1 in order to have them in time for distribution at the November 18 meeting of Presbytery.

Change the World...

>>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.* Employers who have questions about the Benefits Plan or annual enrollment should call the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

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

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

>>Pine Springs Camp Friends Dinner, "Generations of Grace," Sunday, November 19, 2017 at the Greensburg Country Club in Greensburg, PA. This is the camp's annual fundraising event and it is always a wonderful celebration of Pine Springs Camp. The Friends Dinner provides you and your church family with the opportunity to share the exciting, life changing ministry of Pine Springs Camp. As a result of the evening, families will send their children to camp for the first time, offer to volunteer, promise to pray, and financially contribute. For more information visit www.pinesprings.org or call the camp at (814) 629-9834.

>>The Synod of the Trinity celebrated their 300th anniversary recently. Visit Facebook and search #synodtrinity300 to see some of the celebrations.

>>Resources are available for [Reformation Sunday](#) and the [Facing Racism Campaign](#). Click on each link to download these resources.



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