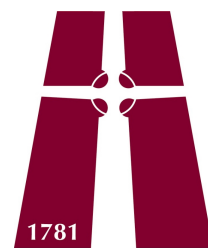


Presbytery of Redstone eNews July 1, 2020



Let's Pray For

---Pray for people infected (or possibly infected, but undetected) by Covid-19 and are facing hospitalization or quarantine.

--Pray for people at higher risk of developing the disease.

--Pray for health care workers (doctors, nurses, technicians) and care givers in nursing homes.

--Pray for researchers responsible for fighting the disease, whether it is in the diagnosis, treatment or development of vaccines.

--Pray for all that have to work with the public such as Police, Fire Fighters, EMS workers, Postal workers, delivery drivers, grocery store staff, Pharmacy employees, and all other companies that have to keep their doors open and for their staff that is exposed to the public everyday.

--Pray for civic leaders at all levels who are responsible for making decisions for the common good regarding our response to the coronavirus.

Contact Us

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Communicate the Word...

Carry on the Work...

Change the World...

Together

RESOURCES FOR CONGREGATIONS

[PCUSA list of resources](#)

Reflections from Rev. Laura Blank, Commissioner to the 224th General Assembly

Dear friends,

I thank you for entrusting the work of being a General Assembly commissioner to me this year. It was an honor to serve Redstone Presbytery in this way. I have been to GA several times before, first as Redstone's YAD to the 216th General Assembly. Each time I attend GA, I come away having learned so much, and this summer was no exception!

The 224th General Assembly is certainly one that will stand out in our memories. It is nothing short of miraculous that this "virtual" assembly was able to proceed, and we were able to complete all critical work, solely through Zoom and other technology. We truly have incredibly gifted staff in our denomination, who worked tirelessly to put together this first-of-its-kind gathering. No other denomination has yet attempted this, so we were all brave adventurers in this endeavor! Thank you all for your prayers for the assembly and for us, your Redstone commissioners.

There were several important pieces of business that we considered during our time together. I would commend the articles written in The Presbyterian Outlook or the Presbyterian News Service to find detailed reports about the specific business.

Each GA takes several important steps forward, but also makes several missteps and fails to take other steps altogether. So, while we can always applaud the efforts of each GA for the important work that is done, we must also consider what work was left undone. This 224th General Assembly will be remembered for what we failed to do. While we enthusiastically passed an overture that decried the sins of systemic racism, we disregarded repeated calls from Black women to specifically address the violence done against Black women and girls. We spoke important words of commitment to anti-racism, but in the next moment silenced and ignored Black women. Whatever the intent of our action, the impact was that many people were hurt by this failure to love and honor our Black sisters. We as Presbyterians are really great at saying the right things, but we very often fail to put those words into action. Impact matters more than intent.

This GA was also marked by many micro and macroaggressions against our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) siblings in Christ. Specifically, these actions were directed towards Black resource people and corresponding members, as well as our Co-Moderators (Elona Street-Stewart, who is Native American, and Gregory Bentley, who is Black) and Stated Clerk (J. Herbert Nelson, who is Black). There have been several excellent articles written that detail this, including one by my friend, Rev. Ryan Landino, a member of the Special Committee on Racism Truth and Reconciliation (of

<https://www.sba.gov>
<https://covid19.arcchurches.com/>
<https://www.vanderbloemen.com/blog/details-of-care-act>
<http://www.capincrouse.com>

BOARD OF PENSIONS

For congregations struggling to meet their Board of Pensions dues obligations, please contact the BOP directly concerning possible options in fulfilling the responsibilities. For emergency assistance proposals for pastors, please contact the presbytery. For those enrolled in the plans co-pays and deductibles related to testing of Coronavirus are waived (see BOP website for more information.

PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION--ONLINE GIVING

Handouts are available through the Presbytery [website pages](#). To enroll or find out additional information, please refer to the [Presbyterian Foundation website](#).

Redstone Pastor Information

[Weekly Zoom Pastor Check-In](#)
 Wednesdays at NOON - virtual food and fellowship

[Redstone Pastors Facebook Group](#)

COVID-19 RESOURCES AND HELPFUL LINKS

>>[PCUSA Resources](#) for churches and individuals
 >>From our Synod of the Trinity a variety of [helpful resources](#)
 >>Helpful links & resources from the [PCUSA Church Store](#)
 >>From the [Board of Pensions](#)
 >>COVID-19: [100 Ideas for Ministers and Ministries Leaders](#)
 >>[Six Strategies](#) for Shepherding the Flock While 'Socially Distanced'

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from receiving the Synod of the Trinity's e-newsletter, simply send that person's email address to the Synod Communications Coordinator, [Mike Givler](#) and he will get you signed up!

which former Redstone pastor Stanley Bhasker is also a member). Also, many of the former GA Moderators, Co-Moderators and Vice Moderators signed "A Common Statement on Racism, Advocacy for Black Women and Girls, and the 224th General Assembly (2020)". Please find these resources linked below and give them prayerful consideration.

<https://sixtysecondpreacher.wordpress.com/2020/06/28/watching-white-supremacy-reflections-on-the-224th-general-assembly-from-a-member-of-the-special-committee-on-racism-truth-and-reconciliation/>

<https://medium.com/@breyeschow/a-common-statement-on-racism-advocacy-for-black-women-and-girls-and-the-224th-general-assembly-9dcff36516ea>

So as we turn to our own presbytery and own congregations, I would again say that our impact matters more than our intent. If we say with our mouths that we stand against racism, but then our actions do not make this clear to our neighbors, then our words are empty. How can we each in our own communities, in our own work, make our actions match up with our words? For most of us here in Redstone, who as white people have not lived under the burden of racism, it begins with confession, study and a willingness to engage in real work of anti-racism. I hope and pray that we will learn from this 224th General Assembly, both by what was accomplished and what was NOT accomplished. And truly, the work of any GA is only as good as it is embraced and carried out at the local level.

The work of a commissioner only begins with the in-person (or virtual!!) assembly and continues until the convening of the following assembly. I am fully committed to continuing my work as one of your commissioners and look forward to continuing my own efforts towards becoming anti-racist and making my impact match up with my intent. We have much work to do, my white siblings in Christ. May God bless us with eyes to see and ears to hear, and may God point our feet in the direction of justice.

Peace,

Rev. Laura Blank, Pleasant View Presbyterian Church
 Commissioner to the 224th General Assembly

Around Redstone and Beyond

>> *Nothing takes the place of a full summer camp season, but Pine Springs Camp is giving families an opportunity to spend a weekend at PSC by offering four July & August weekends when families can rent out one of the Camp's Creekside Cabins. [Read more...](#)*

>> *For the first time in its 115-year history, the New Wilmington Mission Conference will meet online, July 17-19. Programming will be provided for all ages, and there will be no charge to participate in NWMC 2020. "Because we are an international conference bringing people together from around the globe, and because we do not want to put any of our participants at risk, we have made the decision to move to a virtual platform for 2020," said the Rev. Ginny Teitt, director of NWMC and organizing pastor of Concord Presbyterian Church near Columbus, Ohio. "We hope to capture the fun and joy that is often a part of the morning meeting, and we hope to provide opportunities for the meaningful interaction that has made the NWMC dear to so many for so long." Additional*

Thinking about the Future

10 Ways the Church will Changed by Covid-19

<https://convergenceus.org/2020/04/02/ten-ways-the-church-will-be-changed-by-covid-19/>

Church's response to the Coronavirus (summary of Tony Morgan webinar "Unstuck Group")

<https://chriseller.net/2020/the-church-after-coronavirus>

Leading Beyond the Blizzard

<https://journal.praxislabs.org/leading-beyond-the-blizzard-why-every-organization-is-now-a-startup-b7f32fb278ff>

Staying Healthy During Pandemic Pastor Fatigue**OVERCOMING VIRTUAL MEETING FATIGUE**

<https://factsandtrends.net/2020/04/15/6-tips-for-overcoming-virtual-meeting-fatigue/?eid=PDM210048&bid=845578753>

Steps to include in your Routine

<https://factsandtrends.net/2020/04/15/4-steps-to-include-in-your-quarantine-routine/>

Redstone Emergency Grants and Loans

IS YOUR CHURCH SUPPORTING A MINISTRY TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE THAT IS JEOPARDY OF NOT BEING SUSTAINED DURING THIS SEASON?

IS YOUR CHURCH DEVELOPING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY (BEYOND JUST MOVING YOUR NORMAL MINISTRIES ONLINE) THAT YOU COULD USE SEED MONEY FOR ASSISTANCE?

IS YOUR CHURCH STRUGGLING WITH CASH FLOW DIRECTLY RESULTING FROM ABSTAINING FROM IN-PERSON WORSHIP?

As we continue this need to adapt to doing ministry and mission during this season of change, many congregations may be wrestling with not only rapid changes in worship services and ministry programs, but also in the mission initiatives of the congregation. In this COVID-19 pandemic, we are required AND have the opportunity to serve God in faithfulness in new ways. As a Presbytery, we recognize that some of these transitions to different ways of doing ministry are not without costs during this period of virtual worship and

information will be available on the NWMC website as it becomes available, nwmcmmission.org

>>RACISM AWARENESS AND TRANSFORMATION

CONVERSATIONS - In response to the killing of George Floyd, Pittsburgh Presbytery staff members Ralph Lowe and Brian Wallace are recording a series of conversations you are welcome to use with your congregation in whatever format you find appropriate. In episode two, Ralph and Brian dive deep into definitions, notably, how do we define two words: Racist and Racism. In their downloadable resources, you can access the short or extended version in multiple formats, as well as several sermons that are available to any congregation to help supplement their online worship. [Read more here.](#)

>>The PC(USA) Store is offering a useful list of Anti-Racism Resources for our congregations. Please find them by [clicking here.](#)

>>A new discussion group for pastors in order for them to talk openly and honestly about anti-racism understandings and efforts. The group will be meeting via Zoom for the next few Tuesdays (beginning 6/23) at 11:00 a.m. If you are interested in participating for some or all of it, please contact [Sue Washburn](#) or [Skip Noftzger](#) for Zoom details.

>>NEARLY 500 PC(USA) CONGREGATIONS have accepted the exciting and bold invitation to become "a Matthew 25 church." Look for ideas and opportunities that your church too can join our Matthew 25 Initiative. See the worship and ministry resources by [clicking here.](#)

>>2019 Minutes and Register Reviews ~ with the Pandemic situation and the inability to schedule in person meetings for the 2019 minutes reviews, Clerks of Session can do one of two things to have the 2019 Minutes and Register reviewed for the church. You can either drop off your session minutes book and register at the Presbytery office and Skip will review them; or you can get in touch with your COM liaison to have them meet with you personally to do them for you. If you drop them off at the office it will take longer to have them reviewed and returned. If you need to know who your liaison is, please call the Presbytery office at 724.837.6737.

>>2020/2021 Presbyterian Planning Calendars - The Presbytery will be doing a bulk order for the 2020/2021 Planning Calendars. Calendars begin in September again this year. Due to a price increase, the bulk order rate per calendar will be \$10.50 this year. If you would like to get in on the bulk rate deal please complete [the form](#) and email it or mail it with your payment to the Presbytery office. The deadline for orders

potential drop offs in regular support.

Consequently, the Presbytery of Redstone will offer short term grant and loan programs in order to aid congregations without sufficient reserves to make some of these transitions in ministry. [Click here](#) for more information.

will be August 13, 2020 in order to have them for distribution at the September Presbytery meeting. Thank you!

>>Is God calling you? If you are a Ruling Elder who God might be calling to preach or become more involved in pastoral service, Redstone Presbytery (along with Washington, Kiski, Pittsburgh, and Upper Ohio Valley) will be continuing our training program for the preparation of possible "Commissioned Ruling Elders" for the future. New students may begin in the fall of 2020. The program is designed to be both classroom and hands-on experiences and you will receive training and mentorship that will help you grow as a leader in Christ's Church. If interested, please contact Skip Noftzger (Executive Presbyter) at 724.837.6737.



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