

Presbytery of Redstone

eNews

August 19, 2020



Let's Pray For

>>First Presbyterian Church, Murrysville,
Ed Gray, Pastor
District 1

>>Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church,
Murrysville, Curtis Paul, Pastor
District 1

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

>>Derry Presbyterian Church, Marnie
Abraham Russell, Covenant Pastor
District 2

>>First Presbyterian Church, Dunbar, Aleda
Menchyk, Moderator
District 3

>>Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church, Dunbar,
Aleda Menchyk, Moderator
District 3

>>Revloc Presbyterian Church, David
O'Hara, Commissioned Pastor
District 4

>>Bolivar United Presbyterian Church,
James Sunseri, Commissioned Pastor
District 4

Contact Us

Rev. Skip Noftzger

Reflections from Lynn Mance, Presbytery-Wide Commissioned Pastor

The past six months have been filled with uncertainty and cancellations. We are experiencing a time that no one could ever have imagined. Back in March when this pandemic began, we braced ourselves for two weeks of life interruptions not knowing that it was just the beginning.

Although this is a new 2020 experience for all of us we recall uncertainty throughout many generations in the Bible. The Lord told Sarah that she would have a child at age 100. I am sure she was uncertain how that would ever happen. Job was a prosperous man of God who lost everything he had and certainly couldn't understand why God allowed that to happen.

The Israelites left their homes with uncertainty to follow Moses in search of a promised land of milk and honey. When they came upon a sea blocking their way, they assumed their journey was then canceled.

The disciples were tossed around in their boat as the wind and waves produced uncertainty and fear. Jesus was hung on a cross to die with uncertainty what tomorrow would bring to his followers.

Today we are uncertain if our children can safely return to school, if businesses will survive, if employment will return for many, if the Covid-19 cases will continue to rise and what the November election will bring. We are experiencing riots, political hate, canceled sporting events and vacations. We are uncertain what will be canceled tomorrow and in the days to come.

Not only are we aware of these many life uncertainties, uncertainties exist within our churches as well. We wonder if our churches are going to survive this pandemic. We are experiencing loss of community within our members; missed offering; canceled mission trips, Vacation Bible Schools and youth group events. We now zoom meetings, many sit in cars and homes to worship and we look for new

Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk

[blog address](#)

[twitter address](#)

Bobbie Martin

Administrative Assistant/
Bookkeeper

Communicate the Word...

Carry on the Work...

Change the World...

Together

RESOURCES FOR CONGREGATIONS

[PCUSA list of resources](#)

<https://www.sba.gov>

<https://covid19.arcchurches.com/>

[https://www.vanderbloemen.com/blog/details-](https://www.vanderbloemen.com/blog/details-of-care-act)

[of-care-act](#)

<http://www.capincrouse.com>

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](#)

Redstone Emergency Grants and Loans

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

ways to safely administer the Sacraments. If members stay home too long, will they ever come back? What's going to happen to Sunday school and how are we going to have our Christmas Eve worship services? We wonder when we are going to return to "normal".

These uncertainties are real. When we are faced with such uncertainties they can easily become fearful. Loss of control in our lives in itself is fearful to most of us. If we only had a crystal ball, we could perhaps put these uncertainties to rest. But as Christians we know that a crystal ball is not necessary. Although these times are uncertain, our God is not. He cares just as much when we are in difficult times or when life is calm. His mercy is not limited to our earthly conditions.

Jesus tells us "Peace, be still." (Mark 4:39) He invites us to turn to him and trust that his plan is the perfect plan. He will always make a way. Even though our uncertainties and fears are real, they don't have the last word. Reigning over this world of fears is a God who is mightier than they. He is one more powerful than both Galilean storms and the storms that rage in our lives.

"Peace be still" in the days and months to come for God is with us. As we pick up new PC(USA) calendars, pack school lunches and head into a new season, instead of focusing on the uncertainties, may we be given a fresh revelation of the goodness and greatness of God. Communicate the Word....Carry on the work....Change the world...Together.

Lynn Mance, Redstone Presbytery-wide Commissioned Pastor

IPLF Fall Workshops

The Inter-Presbytery Leadership Formation, a joint ministry of Redstone, Washington, Upper Ohio Valley, Kiskiminetas, and Pittsburgh Presbyteries, will be offering the following workshops this fall:



Proclaiming the Word - Rev. Ken Foust, Pastor, Grace Community Presbyterian Church, Lower Burrell, Instructor - August 22, 2020

Polity - John Rodgers, Stated Clerk, Washington Presbytery, Instructor - September 12, 2020

Ethics and Boundaries - Michelle Snyder, Crow's Feet Consulting, Instructor - October 10, 2020

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 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.

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'

Anti-Racism Resources

Transforming Congregational Mission - Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell, PTS World Mission Initiative, Instructor - November 14, 2020

Pastoral Care - Rev. Marnie Silbert, HR Redstone Presbytery, Instructor - December 12, 2020

All workshops are FREE and will be offered from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Redstone Presbytery office, 1004 Mt. Pleasant Road, Greensburg, PA 15601, and/or via Zoom videoconferencing. Please RSVP to [Bobbie](#) at Redstone Presbytery and let her know the workshop(s) you are interested in attending.

Week of Action



Friends,

Communities of faith and people across the nation are joining the movement to confront the sins of racism and white supremacy. They are coming together to demand that Black lives of every age, gender, gender identity and sexuality are no longer ignored, dismissed or pushed to the margins of our society. They are protesting the unlawful and unjust killings of innocent Black individuals.

The [Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\)](#) affirms that all Black Lives Matter.

The [Presbyterian Week of Action, Aug. 24-30](#), is an endeavor to provide a public witness that facilitates education, visibility and action that reinforces our PC(USA) statements and policy that support eradicating racism and acknowledge that God loves all Black lives.

In "[Responding to the Sin of Racism and a Call to Action](#)," the 224th General Assembly (2020) declared, "Our country's most important institutions have been built to sustain white privilege, to protect white lives and white property at the expense of our siblings of color. The church through ignorance, denial, and in some cases deliberate action, has participated in this injustice. We have been slow to face the reality of systemic racism. We have been slow to acknowledge the pain of our fellow Presbyterians, of our fellow Christians, of our fellow citizens, and of those who have come to America for a better life, whose value has been judged by the color of their skin." The Assembly called the Church to "actively confront and dismantle systemic racism in our church and in society at large, and to work for a more just, merciful, and peaceful country that allows all of God's children to flourish."

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

Matthew 25 Initiative



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.



Board of Pensions Updates



DOUG PORTZ, Church Consultant with the Board of Pensions, has some key updates to alert you to. [Click here](#) to read more.

By joining together as national staff and the greater Church, we hope to provide faithful leadership in the area of justice, love and equality within our denomination and communities.

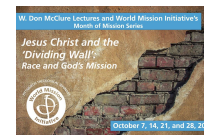
Join with us, the national office and PC(USA) churches across the nation, the week of Aug. 24-30. Events will include a town hall, film screening, a rally and a day of service to our communities. Act now by planning to participate in the [daily schedule of events and share the news with our digital toolkit](#).

While we recognize and honor the good work toward justice that has been ongoing in our denomination, we also realize that in this time it is not enough. Though the Presbyterian Week of Action hopes to meet the immediacy of our current context, it will not be the culmination of our work as a denomination, for we have a long way to go to eradicate systemic racism and white supremacy. Nonetheless, this week will empower us, challenge us and enliven the faith we follow.

PTS World Mission Initiative Conference

STAY AT HOME AND ATTEND A CONFERENCE -

Noted authors and educators Brenda Salter McNeil and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove will headline this fall's World Mission Initiative Conference, an online series October 7, 14, 21, and 28. Lectures, Q & A, and facilitated discussions for your small group FREE! <https://www.pts.edu/wmi-conference>



PTS Responds/A Conversation on Race



You're invited to join weekly webinars, [PTS Responds/A Conversation on Race](#), Wednesdays at noon through September 2.

This is the latest in the inclusion of regional judicatory leaders, and it is well worth hearing how leadership understand the work of anti-racism ecclesiastically, theologically, and socially. A recent [book](#) by a Black Lutheran pastor takes its title from the notion that the ELCA is the "Whitest Denomination in the US." As we commit to the work of anti-racism in the context of faith communities, it's crucial to keep awareness of the systemic manifestations of racism and White privilege front and center and avoid excessive focus on personal behaviors and choices. These conversations have helped

Church Cemetery

**Does your church have a cemetery?
If so, are you part of a cemetery
association or is your session/board
of trustees responsible for maintaining that cemetery?
Please let me know the answer to these two questions
by [clicking here](#) so I can update my records. Thank you!!**



explore those systemic realities. And as a community committed to the education, formation, and equipping of people for the sake of the church in the world, learning about the commitments of leadership in those same churches helps us do our work more faithfully and mindfully.



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