

Presbytery of Redstone

eNews

October 28, 2020



Let's Pray For

>>First Presbyterian Church, Avonmore,
Caroline Vickery, Temporary Supply
District 1

>>Delmont Presbyterian Church, Cliff
Foster, Moderator
District 1

>>First Presbyterian Church, Greensburg,
Martin Ankrum, Pastor
District 2

>>Maplewood Presbyterian Church,
Greensburg, Steve LaSor, Pastor
District 2

>>East Liberty Presbyterian Church,
Vanderbilt, David McElroy, Commissioned
Pastor
District 3

>>Palmer Community Presbyterian Church,
Adah, Laura Blank, Moderator
District 3

>>First Presbyterian Church, Cresson, David
McCabe, Pastor
District 4

>>First Presbyterian Church, Ebensburg,
Owar Ojulu, Pastor
District 4

Reflections from the Executive Presbyter



"Defined by Numbers"

Anyone who knows me probably also has an awareness that I can easily become focused upon information, data and numbers. Numbers of all different kinds often give us an indication of "where we are" or "how we are doing." So, while numbers don't mean everything, they do mean something. Of course, numbers should not be used alone to measure our progress or our faithfulness to our God and God's kingdom. In, and of themselves, they cannot define us, our identity, our calling, our fidelity.

For the past eight months, perhaps, during this season of Covid-19, we have been "captured" by the numbers. They may have indicated those who have been infected or affected, or those who have fallen or those who endured, but they will never tell the whole story. Maybe, we have focused on numbers "closer to home," such as those in attendance "in-person" and those participating online in worship experiences or the scale in which financial contributions have either "kept pace," fallen behind or even, exceeded expectations. All of these are worth recognizing and noting, but they, by themselves, do not define us as the Church of Christ and Christ's kingdom.

For we know, in a world where the kingdom of heaven does not compare to the empires of this world or even those of our own "making," there will be different and more complex ways of measuring that which will endure through the purifying cleansing of God's final action. In God's reign, the irony of faithfulness might be evidenced not just in the grand spectacle, but in the simple gestures of "offering food" or "cups of cold water" or "welcoming the stranger" or "clothing the naked" or "visitation of the sick or the captives." Each of these kingdom values, among others, can and must characterize our lives and our identity as the "called out" disciples of Jesus Christ.

Contact Us

Rev. Skip Noftzger

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-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 Emergency Grants and Loans

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

In September, the Presbytery of Redstone endorsed the Matthew 25 initiative of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Though God's mission is broader than just that passage, those kingdom values signify our understanding and values. As a Presbytery, we are encouraging and challenging each of our congregations to consider how this initiative with a commitment to any one or more of addressing the focus areas of building congregational vitality, eradicating systemic poverty or dismantling structural racism might become components of the mission and vision God is calling your congregation. More information is available on the [Presbytery website](#) and at the Presbyterian Mission Agency [website](#).

As we continue to seek our God together in this region, may we not be preoccupied with "19" or any other number that might seek to define us, but let us prepare for God's kingdom warned by Jesus in Matthew 24 and 25 and live out those values together as congregations for the honor and glory of the One will bring that kingdom home on earth as it is in heaven.

Service of Ordination

The Presbytery of Redstone is happy to report that Rick Watson has received a call to the First Presbyterian Church of Vandalia, Missouri. Both in the congregation and within the presbytery, he was approved unanimously. The Missouri Union Presbytery has requested, and the Presbytery of Redstone Committee on Ministry has agreed, to ordain Rick on their behalf and then transfer him to their presbytery. The service of ordination will take place on November 8; 3:00 p.m. @Third Presbyterian Church, Uniontown. We also anticipate that the service might be streamed on Facebook.

You are invited to attend and support Rick as he begins this next chapter after many years of both service as a commissioned pastor and this journey through seminary, ordination exams and his first call as an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament. Even if you are not able to attend, I would encourage you to reach out to Rick in some way to affirm this call and his journey. You can contact Bobbie or Skip at the Presbytery office to get Rick's contact information.

November Presbytery Meeting

Presbytery Council voted to conduct the November 21, 2020 Presbytery meeting in the same way as the previous meeting with most participants primarily through Zoom and the option for any platform participants or those without internet access to be "in-person" at the Puckety Presbyterian Church in Lower Burrell. The Presbytery will need to know who the designated voting elder(s) will be for each church. Also, if visitors are planning to attend,

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.

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](#)

please let the Presbytery office know those as well. Information for logging in to the meeting via Zoom will be sent to everyone as the meeting date gets closer.

PTS Offers "Hope and Healing: Mental Health First Aid Training"

Interested Teaching Elders and Commissioned Pastors will need to register if you are interested in joining this training. Registration information is listed below.



Oct. 30 and Nov. 13, 2020, 9:00 - 11:45 a.m.

Nov. 13, 2020, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Where is the training?

The meetings will all be online via Zoom. Our office will send links before each session.

Who is the training for?

Christian leaders of rural congregations from Southwest PA, Southeast Ohio, and West Virginia.

What is it?

It is a three-part online series intended to empower rural faith leaders with the knowledge, practices, and grounding they need to respond with grace and effectiveness to mental health concerns and to build viable, strong support systems to advance this work in their churches.

What is the structure of the program?

One day/week for three weeks. Social workers with expertise in faith-based mental therapy will lead the two short sessions; certified professionals will lead the full-day session.

What will the program do?

- >The program's presenters will instruct participants on:
- >How to differentiate spiritual care from mental health and clarify what faith leaders are equipped to provide;
- >The theological rationale for why the church's mission includes understanding care for those with mental illness;
- >Becoming familiar and developing relationships with local mental health resources; and
- >Learning the triage basics offered through Mental Health First Aid, a skills-based course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-use issues.

>>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

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](#).

Seeking the Beloved Community - Synod Online Offering

Beginning on September 27; 7:00 p.m., the Synod began offering a series of presentations of how we might consider our present issues and concerns in light of the "Beloved Community" promoted by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In the first session (9/27), Rev. Dr. James Calvin Davis, professor at Middlebury College, author of several books including most recently, *Forbearance* (and formerly of Redstone Presbytery) will help us to consider the characteristics of the "Beloved Community." For more information - [click here](#). Presentation will be by Zoom and will be recorded for later viewing as well.

Why should I take part in the training?

>To obtain a better understanding of providing spiritual care and referring those with mental illness to other resources.
 >To help end the stigma often associated with mental illness in faith communities, thereby helping your church to extend hospitality to those who are ill and their loved ones.

After the training is completed, what next?

Short term: We plan to have a follow-up celebration with all participants in May 2021 - Mental Health Awareness Month - to share our stories of success, projects, and best practices.

Long term: This program is supported by a PC(USA) grant and is a pilot project for extending mental health training to faith leaders throughout the denomination.

How do I register?

Visit www.pts.edu/hope-and-healing-2021 for the link to the registration form. After we review your submitted form, we will email you regarding your participation in the program.

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

Call the Office of Continuing Education at 412-924-1345 or email ConEd@pts.edu.

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:

Ethics and Boundaries - Michelle Snyder, Crow's Feet Consulting, 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.

If you were unable to attend the 9/27 session (or would like to review it), below is a link to the recording that has been posted on the Synod's YouTube channel. Also, you are welcome and urged to share this link with anyone who you think might benefit from this conversation.

Link: <https://youtu.be/jT1K3jFLC6Y>

Reminder that this series will continue into October and November, with details and registration available on the Synod's website here:

<https://www.syntrinity.org/synod/beloved-community-conversations/>

- Nov. 8: Technology (Bruce Reyes-Chow)
- Nov. 15: Racism and White Privilege (tentative)

Thank you again for your interest in this conversation and we hope to see you again soon!

Tax Exemption Certificates Update

The State is well behind in getting all the certificates renewed. The State extended the deadline of existing certificates until December 31st. Attached is a document that churches can use until the certificate is received.



The State has been sending the Synod some of the certificates which they are then forwarding to the churches. You may contact the Business Administrator at the Synod office directly to see if your certificate came in.

PTS Offering Online Classes and Events

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is offering a schedule of continuing education classes and events this fall and winter. Offerings include: *Claiming Pentecost: New Beginnings in a Post-Pandemic Church*; *Wise Women and Spirituality*; and *Spiritual Writing*. For more

Synod of the Trinity Offers Grant

The past few months have presented new needs, new missional opportunities and new relationships. Have you been challenged in new ways to partner with other denominations to live out the love of Christ in your community? Has a local ministry need emerged or been pondered during these COVID impacted times? There may be grant support available to you to carry out this important work. The Ecumenical Grant is a one-time grant of up to \$2,000 and the application deadline is November 1. For more information [click here](#).



Position Available

Upper Ohio Valley Presbytery is seeking a part-time stated clerk for the presbytery. Must have thorough knowledge of the Book of Order and Robert's Rules. Decent and orderly people can send a PIF or resume to Stated Clerk Search Committee, c/o Vance Memorial Presbyterian Church, 905 National Road, Wheeling WV 26003. Resumes should be received on or before November 13th.

New Online Resource for Pastors



Samaritan Counseling is offering a new resource for pastors, online Worship for Pastors (www.congregationforclergy.org).

Beginning this week, they are offering weekly, 35-40 minute worship services designed specifically for the challenges pastors face in a changing world. Pastors rarely have the opportunity worship in services focusing entirely on their issues. The services offer themes, scripture, prayer, music, and sermons formed with pastors in mind, with the hope that pastors will use these services as part of a weekly discipline helping them lead churches in really difficult times.

The services can be found at www.congregationforclergy.org. The worship is led by an expanding team of pastors and church leaders from different denominations who's vocations are devoted to helping pastors and churches engage in healthy ministry and mission.



information go to
<https://www.pts.edu/chronological-schedule>



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