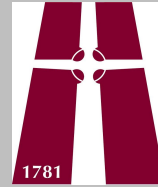


# Presbytery of Redstone eNews

## November 18, 2020



### Please pray for...

#### District 1 Churches

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

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

#### District 2 Churches

>>West Hempfield Presbyterian Church,  
Irwin, Andrew Wirt, Pastor

>>First Presbyterian Church, Jeannette,  
Dawn Sherwood, Pastor

#### District 3 Churches

>>Marion Presbyterian Church, Belle  
Vernon, Robert Prinkey, Commissioned  
Pastor

>>Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, Belle  
Vernon, Donald Glunt, Pastor

#### District 4 Churches

>>Second Presbyterian Church,  
Johnstown, Art Moffat, Temporary Supply,  
Carole Isley Corey, Moderator

>>Westmont Presbyterian Church,  
Johnstown, Rene' Whitaker, Interim Pastor

### Reflections from ... Skip Noftzger, Executive Presbyter



#### Pandemic Updates and Church Decision Making

Friends,

Along with most of you, I have continued to follow the news of increasing numbers of cases and hospitalizations of the COVID-19 virus in our region of the country. In all parts of the Presbytery, there are notable increases in numbers of cases and hospitalizations, but also in the positivity rates (percentage of positive tests of the whole). Unfortunately, even with better treatments available, potential fatalities from this virus could also begin to rise as a lagging indicator of both diagnosis and hospitalization.

While we are not alone in the impact of this pandemic affecting the entire country, we can be responsible for those actions that we can take both as individuals and as decision-making bodies on behalf of our congregations. It is imperative that we reinforce behaviors that protect others, both those who are vulnerable and those who “think” they are invincible. This can be the case with plans not only for our own upcoming family gatherings, but in the way we choose

to gather as church families.

Consequently, I urge you to stay vigilant not only in your past safety practices, but in consideration of revisiting some of our activities and ministries. From the beginning, our efforts have reflected a prudential approach to “manage risk” on behalf of the whole of our congregations. With increased numbers of cases in our communities (and maybe in our congregations), the “management” of those risks may call now for some different choices (whether in person or virtual) concerning our worship gatherings, our various ministry activities and our office/administrative settings.

At the very least, we should be prepared to offer alternatives in the case of know exposures or positive cases among our congregants. Additionally, we may need to reconsider indoor gatherings of any size for any length of time as the result of increased community spread among our populations, increasing the likelihood of some of our participants being unknowing potential communicators of the virus. This could be the case not only for the immediate situation, but in anticipation of Advent and Christmas programs. While there are no guarantees in any of the actions that we might take, it is our responsibility to consider the risks and make choices to minimize the probability of further spread or harm.

Please consult and check the dashboard provided by the PA Department of Health (<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Cases.aspx>), where you can track by county or zip code. Additionally, I might also suggest the use of the tool put together by Georgia Tech as a “COVID-19 Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool.” It uses variables such as current number of cases, group size and testing availability in order to evaluate the risk assessment level of participating in an event in that location.

As always, I am available to consult with you as you seek to serve the Lord our God and your people faithfully during this ongoing season. As we seek to faithfully plan and prepare, we do so mindful that our God is Lord of heaven and earth. In our actions together, we testify to a grace that leads us beyond any and all fears yet challenges us to embody and signify God’s kingdom even in periods of “exile” through alternative expressions.

Blessings,

Rev. Richard “Skip” Noftzger  
Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk  
Presbytery of Redstone



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

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.

## Redstone Pastor Information

### Weekly Zoom Pastor Check-In

Wednesdays at NOON - virtual food and fellowship

[Redstone Pastors Facebook Group](#)

## Anti-Racism Resources

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

## 2020 Financial Records

The Bookkeeper will be closing the books for 2020 on Thursday, January 7, 2021. All contributions will need to be received in the Presbytery office prior to that date to be included in the 2020 records. Any monies received after that date will be credited toward the 2021 financial records. If you have any questions you can contact Bobbie at the Presbytery office at 724.837.6737



## 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 you church too can join our Matthew 25 Initiative. See the worship and ministry resources by [clicking here](#).



LEADERFEST – will move online for two Saturday mornings, February 6 (*Racism and the Church* keynote presentation and discussions) and February 13 ( Basic Elder training and Basic Deacon training, plus Advanced electives). *Leaderfest* is an annual leadership enrichment event, jointly sponsored by Washington Presbytery and Upper Ohio Valley Presbytery and open to participation by Redstone Presbytery church leaders. Watch for details!

## 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 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.

## Presbytery Staff

[Richard "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*

Presbytery of Redstone

[www.redstonepresbytery.org](http://www.redstonepresbytery.org)