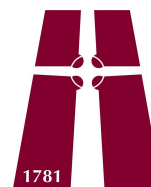


Presbytery of Redstone eNews

February 10, 2021



Please pray for...

District 1 Churches

>>Community United Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria, Leonard Morgan, Commissioned Pastor

>>Congruity Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria, Cliff Foster, Pastor

District 2 Churches

>>First Presbyterian Church, Irwin, Ron Wakeman, Pastor

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

District 3 Churches

>>First Presbyterian Church, Masontown, Lee McDermott, Moderator

>>McClellandtown Presbyterian Church, Lee McDermott, Pastor

District 4 Churches

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

>>Pleasant Grove Presbyterian Church, Ligonier, John McClure, Moderator

Reflections from ... Skip Noftzger, Executive Presbyter



The Waters of Baptism: God's Promises and Ours - Q1

Maybe for many of you, your baptism took place when you were much too young to be able to have any recollection. For me, as the result of my family moving around and sporadic attendance at a variety of Lutheran churches, I do remember that day. I am not sure of the exact age, but I was in elementary school and old enough to know what was going on (although not old enough to affirm the responses to the questions for myself). Yet, we affirm that God's grace and promises are evident in this outward sign of washing with water and sealing us with God in the covenant community. So, we trust in those faithful promises of God even when they are sometimes difficult to always see lived out in our lives or those of our children.

Yet, within this covenantal ceremony grounded in God's grace, we also are asked to make promises. Perhaps, they were made by our parents or guardians on our behalf and to be confirmed later by our own lips or maybe they were made by you if baptized as an adult. Such promises come as responses to the inquiries as you gathered by those waters signifying cleaning. They were and are our covenantal promises before a congregation, but most importantly, before God.

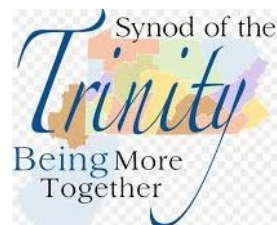
Having been prompted, we are encouraged to reject sin, profess faith in Jesus Christ and to confess it through words and action. Typically, we are asked to respond in that first public pledge, "*do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?*" Sometimes, I am struck by how strange the words must sound to those in our contemporary world and its ways of life.

All too often, while we may admit privately that we have failings, it certainly is not something that we "put out there." Although we participate in the obligatory prayer of confession week in and week out, our words find it difficult to penetrate our hard shell of satisfaction, rationalization and

even defensiveness. Yet, there it was. On that important day, our parents or we promised before God and everybody there that we do and would renounce sin and evil, both internal and external. Beyond even our own susceptibility to individual poor behavior or self-serving perspective, we have promised to repudiate and forsake evil and its power in the world..... upon us, upon others, upon our congregations, upon the world.

It is a hard promise to fulfill. Although we know, such promises are only fulfilled by God's mercy, too quickly, we want to jump past it to those more affirming pledges. Yet, in remembering our baptism, we can and must pause there. Pause, so we might once more consider and answer the inquiry....*"do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?"* To answer authentically, we will be challenged to consider our lives once more, measuring them not by relative comparison, but by God's standards. We will be confronted by a world around us where power is exhibited often labeled so but not necessarily *"in the name of Jesus."* Through the lenses of God's kingdom perspective, we will need to respond. So, the question then on that day, remains our question today....*Do we? Will we?*

The Synod of the Trinity is pleased to be a part of the second annual Rich Heritage of African Americans in the Presbyterian Church celebration on Saturday, February 20th, at 1:00 p.m. We invite you to tune into this zoom celebration sponsored by the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus. The keynote speaker is Rev. Dr. Warren Lesane, Synod Exec and Stated Clerk, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic. Registration is required, [click here](#).



REMINDER!! The Annual Statistical Report for 2020 will be due online at <https://oga.pcusa.org/stats> by February 14, 2021. You will need a user name and password to file this report and it will need to be approved by your session prior to submitting it. If you are unsure of what your user name and password is please call me and I can provide it to you.

You will also need to have the various annual reports, (2021 Terms of Call, Manse Inspection Report, and List of Session Members by Class) required by the Presbytery, submitted by March 31, 2021. You may file most of these reports online at <http://redstonepresbytery.org/clerk-of-session-annual-report> if that is easier for you. This does not require any type of login information.

Although you can submit your membership numbers with the Presbytery form, that does not fulfill the requirement of the complete annual statistical report at the General Assembly. You will still need to file the complete annual report to the Office of the General Assembly at the web address listed above.

If you have any questions or need assistance with any of these filings, please do not hesitate to contact Skip or me. We would be more than happy to help you.



Come join the First Presbyterian Church, 501 Fayette Avenue, Rostraver Township, PA for a **TAKEOUT** Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser on Saturday, February 13th from 3-5 pm! Dinner includes: Spaghetti, Two Meatballs, Bread, Salad, and Dessert! Adult: \$10; Children 10 & under: \$5. Please call the church office for tickets at 724-929-7616 or stop in between

9 a.m. and 1 p.m.! Remember, this is **take-out only!** Tune to FM 88.3 on your car radio for instructions when you arrive at the church. You can come in to get your meals, but please

observe all social-distancing guidelines. Otherwise, enter from Fayette Avenue and follow the line to purchase or pick up your tickets. We will bring your meals to you.

REST, RENEWAL, RESILIENCE

The Synod of the Trinity is offering a Lenten Space for you. This three hour virtual retreat is designed to give faith leaders a chance to take a breath and a break in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. A time of rest, refocus, and recharge. Two opportunities are being offered - March 9 at 9:00 a.m. and March 10 at 1:30 p.m. Space limited - so be sure to sign up soon if you want to participate. [Click here](#) for more information or to register.



PASTOR GETAWAY DAY

Join colleagues on April 5 (right after Easter) for a “getaway” day at Pine Springs Camp. Leave behind the Zoom meetings, cell phone calls, and pandemic isolation for some time outdoors, campfires, and relaxation. Arrive around 10:00 a.m. and stay as long as you want. Lunch will be provided.

2nd SUNDAY EASTER SERVICE (and possibly others)

Looking for a break after Lent and Easter Sunday? Redstone Presbytery will have pre-recorded services available for your use in your congregation. Look for it on the Presbytery YouTube channel and feel free to use on April 11 or any other Sunday.

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS... Addressing racism and the church. A confession and call to action in the Presbytery of Redstone that was adopted by Presbytery Council in August of 2020. If you would like to use these resources for discussion in your churches please do so. The [statement](#) and [video](#) are also available from the Presbytery website.



FREE VIRTUAL WORKSHOP, White Ally in the 21st Century - Later this month the acclaimed speaker and workplace personnel trainer, Dr. David Campt, will tackle how to use practical dialogue to dismantle unintended bias and racism. His work, “The White Ally Toolkit” helps us see how to create a compassionate and welcoming space where love is the driving force of belonging. [Registration](#) is open now for the White Ally

in the 21st Century-Practices Toward the Beloved Community workshop, to be held online on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. We hope you will join!

Stewardship Kaleidoscope 2021

Stewardship Kaleidoscope 2021 will be in Cincinnati, OH, September 13-15, as well as offering a virtual experience. This annual conference offers education, worship, and amazing opportunities for growth in stewardship and generosity.



This year we are excited to announce that Tod Bolsinger of Fuller Theological Seminary and author of *Canoeing the Mountains and Tempered Resilience* will join us for two plenary sessions,

with the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, Stated Clerk of the PC(USA), leading us in worship. There will be more than two dozen workshops for in-person attendees that address topics from the spirituality of stewardship to practical tools for managing pledge campaigns.

Stewardship Kaleidoscope draws leaders from across the Presbyterian Church (USA) and other ecumenical partners with content designed to help participants explore stewardship that has a real impact on ministry.

Look for more speaker announcements and news about registration coming soon! Find additional information about the 2021 and past conferences at StewardshipKaleidoscope.org.



The Inter-Presbytery Leadership Formation, a joint ministry of Redstone, Washington, Upper Ohio Valley, Kiskiminetas, and Pittsburgh Presbyteries, are again offering workshops this spring. The next workshop in the series is:

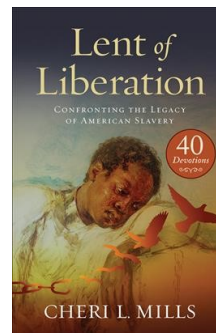
- February 20, 2021 - Stewardship All Year 'Round - Rev. Dr. Dan Hans, Instructor

Christian Stewardship and resource management go well beyond a 'get up the budget' campaign each autumn. Participants will study Biblical Stewardship, review traditional stewardship practices, and address new understandings of congregational giving and finances.

This workshop is FREE and will be offered from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. They are offered via Zoom video conferencing. If you want to attend this workshop, please RSVP to [Bobbie](#) at Redstone Presbytery and let her know that you are interested in attending.

NEW LENTEN DEVOTIONAL AVAILABLE AT THE PC(USA) STORE

Reflecting on Lenten themes of exodus, redemption, discipline, and repentance, [this Lenten devotional](#) confronts the legacy of American slavery and empowers readers for the work of racial justice. The publisher has also created [free digital resources](#), which include a group study guide, sermon series guide, and images for use during worship or study.



INTERACTIVE STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION

The Presbyterian Foundation is generously offering a day of online stewardship training on Tuesday March 2. Topics include: Church Mission and Sustainability, Virtual Campaigns and Online Giving, and Practical Tips for Congregational Budgeting. Find more information [here](#).

Redstone Pastor Information

[Weekly Zoom Pastor Check-In](#)

Wednesdays at NOON - virtual food and fellowship

[Redstone Pastors Facebook Group](#)



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](#).

Presbytery Staff

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Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk

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[Bobbie Martin](#)

Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper

Communicate the Word...

Carry on the Work...

Change the World...

Together

Presbytery of Redstone

www.redstonepresbytery.org

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