

Presbytery of Redstone eNews

March 3, 2021



Please pray for...

<p>District 1 Churches</p> <p>>>First Presbyterian Church, Avonmore, Caroline Vickery, Temporary Supply</p> <p>>>Delmont Presbyterian Church, Anthony Catullo, Interim Pastor</p>	<p>District 2 Churches</p> <p>>>United Presbyterian Church, Latrobe, John Simpson, Interim Pastor</p> <p>>>Reunion Presbyterian Church, Mt. Pleasant, Russ Baird, Commissioned Pastor</p>
<p>District 3 Churches</p> <p>>>Calvin United Presbyterian Church, Scottdale, Doug Yauger, Commissioned Pastor</p> <p>>>Grace Chapel Presbyterian Church, Smithfield, Lee McDermott, Pastor</p>	<p>District 4 Churches</p> <p>>>Patton Presbyterian Church, Alice Tondora, Moderator</p> <p>>>Revloc Presbyterian Church, David O'Hara, Commissioned Pastor</p>

Reflections from ... Skip Noftzger, Executive Presbyter



The Waters of Baptism: "Devoted to Christ (and each other)" - Q4

"Will you devote yourself to the church's teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers?"

In our contemporary version of church and living as the Body of Christ, we have developed various structures, liturgies and practices that go beyond what was known and expected among those first followers of Jesus. While in God's providence, each might be considered against the measure of faithful expressions for our contemporary context. Yet, in the final question asked (baptized or making a public profession reaffirming their baptism), we are brought back to the simplicity of descriptive metrics identified in that earliest form of the church.

At Pentecost, as people hear God's being praised in their native languages, they were receptive to the proclamation by Peter interpreting and applying this giving of the Spirit. Fulfillment of this universal gift had taken place because of the words and actions of Jesus who was crucified and then raised (unlike the Psalmist) from the dead and exalted. Because this Jesus, those first hearers were challenged to know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Christ. Having been "cut" to the core of their being, they asked (even demanded), what should they do? Repent and be baptized. It was a promise for them, and for their children and for all who are far away. So, having responded in repentance and faith, having been baptized, what became the initial sign of this new life?

The "testimony" of the people of God in that Pentecost beginning is multifold, each involving devotion. The practices are measured not merely by their participation on that single day, but on the many days that would follow. Their "devotion" would be lived out in times of adversity and persecution, with the exhibition of wonders and signs, and signified through their praises of God and their commitment to the goodwill of all. These markers characterize not only that earliest church gathering, but every faithful expression of God's people doing God's mission ever since. In various times, the church may have testified in bigger and more complex ways, but it has not and shall not abandon these core commitments.

For each of us, the inquiry of our devotion asks us to say clearly where our loyalty lies. Somehow, the form and substance of "devotion" may mean more than the neatly categorized (and therefore limited) of our church activities. If we have affirmed that Jesus is Lord and we, his faithful disciples, then is the sign of that testimony present? Does the expression of our faith, the sign and seal of our baptism, result in a willing devotion to worship, love and service?

"Will you devote yourself to the church's teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers?"

Such devotion comes not as a manifestation of the will or determination, but rather flows out of hearts of gratitude. While it may necessitate a discipline in our thanksgiving, yet consistency of

devotion is sustained only in our day by day recognition and dependence upon a God who has, is and will deliver us. Affirm it and live by it.

"I will, with God's help." May it be so...



DECENNIAL FILINGS

For important information from the Synod of the Trinity regarding the requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for Decennial Filings [click here](#)

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.



Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania Shares Article
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has included clergy and other essential support personnel for houses of worship in Group 1B of its COVID-19 vaccination plan. However, with the expansion of Group 1A and the limited supply of vaccines, it may be quite a while before Group 1B is invited to receive its first shots. Click [here](#) to read the entire article.

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.

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. There are still a few spots available but space is limited. Be sure to sign up soon if you want to participate. [Click here](#) for more information or to register.



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:

- March 20, 2021 - Vitality in All Sizes; Small Congregations - Rev. Lee McDermott, Facilitator

This workshop is FREE and will be offered from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing. If you want to attend this workshop, please RSVP to [Bobbie](#) at Redstone Presbytery by Thursday, February 18th and let her know and she will forward you the login information.

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 have 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.

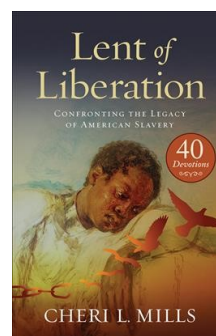


The Healing Prayer Ministry Network of Redstone Presbytery meets the first Thursday of each month from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the Presbytery office. The next meeting will be this Thursday, March 4. Some bring a snack. We will "catch up," learn more about Biblical prayer, and we will pray. Handouts will be available. New folks are welcome and encouraged to join this group. Simply show up if you would like to become a part of this vital ministry.

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.

Other Lenten devotionals can be downloaded from [Pittsburgh Theological Seminary](#), [Presbyterian Outlook](#), and [Presbyterians Today](#) by clicking on each individual link.



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](#).

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Communicate the Word...

Carry on the Work...

Change the World...

Together

Presbytery of Redstone

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