

# Presbytery of Redstone eNews

## November 10, 2021



Please pray for...

### District 1 Churches

~~Community United Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria, Len Morgan, Commissioned Pastor

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

### District 2 Churches

~~New Hope Presbyterian Church, North Huntingdon, Brenda Barnes, Pastor

~~Level Green Presbyterian Church, Trafford, Geoff Rach, Pastor

### District 3 Churches

~~Palmer Community Presbyterian Church, Adah, Laura Blank, Moderator

~~First Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon, Mary Kay Glunt, Pastor

### District 4 Churches

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

~~Bethel Presbyterian Church, New Florence, James Sunseri, Commissioned Pastor



#### Connecting the Dots.???

In the space in which we are living currently, there remain so many unknowns. Perhaps, it is the length of the pandemic. The long-term effects not only upon our personal lives, but our institutions, may be here to stay. Or, will the differences among us continue to be used to divide us or will they recede with a renewed commitment to common good? Will the ways we engage with one another to form community be further mediated through technology or will we develop alternative embodied spaces of

touch and presence?

Although like many of you, I might have my own ideas and answers to some or all of the above concerns, the truth is that we do not know for sure. Disruption had begun even before the pandemic and is now amplified by the shift from reliance upon past traditions and pattern. So, the reality is that we do not know. Our ability to prognosticate based upon past experience has become even more uncertain even than its previous limitations. How will we lead our families, our congregations, our communities in these times of transition and

change when we might be puzzled by the ways we may need to “connect the dots?” Will we be able and willing to step back, to reconsider that they just might be able to be connected in different ways?

For you and for me, it will require our dependence upon God’s power and presence in guiding us. It will require more than words, more than theological statements believed with conviction. We will need to actually practice, to live by faith both personally and organizationally? Will we be willing to trust the sovereignty of our God and the promise of the presence of the Holy Spirit? Will we embrace the wonder of what God just might be doing among us? And, will we be honest in our desire to discern where God may desire that we go, what we may do together and most importantly, who we are as communities of the covenant faithfulness?

The “dots” have been and still are being re-arranged. Some may be the results of our own sins and failures past and present. Yet, some just may be the divine hand of God’s providence. Are we ready to venture into this unknown future? Will we seek to “connect the dots” not merely by our own power, but in following the One who has promised sufficient grace to protect and to lead us through even to that Day when all things are made new, when the dots are connected for “good.”

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## NOVEMBER PRESBYTERY GATHERING

Join us for the November 20 Presbytery meeting that will be held at the Colver Presbyterian Church (10:00-1:00). This will be an in person meeting and also via zoom.



All social distancing protocols will be followed for the in person meeting so we ask that you *please bring a mask and that you let us know in the Presbytery office if you plan to attend in person so we may plan accordingly*. Also, if you are planning to attend via zoom, *please provide your email address to us as well so we are able to get the login information to you prior to the meeting*. The packet and login information will be made available by the end of the day on Thursday, November 11.

*Please call the Presbytery office at 724.837.6737 or respond via email at secretary@redstonepresbytery.org to confirm which way you will be attending. Thank you!*



### 2021 Financial Records

The Bookkeeper will be closing the books for 2021 on Wednesday, January 12, 2022. All contributions will need to be received in the Presbytery office prior to that date to be included in the 2021 records. Any monies received after that date will be credited toward the 2022 financial records. If you have any questions you can contact Bobbie at the Presbytery office at 724.837.6737.

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On December 4th (Saturday), Puckety Presbyterian Church (1009 Puckety Church Rd Lower Burrell PA) will once again be hosting a Blue Christmas

Service (4:00 PM) - this service is offered particularly for those who find the holidays hard to celebrate, whether because of a loved one who has passed or other hardship. Bring someone along and come and receive God's peace for whatever valley you are walking in.



## Rev. Forrest Claassen elected as next Synod executive

The Rev. Forrest Claassen, co-executive and stated clerk of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, has been elected the next executive of the Synod of the Trinity, a multi-state mid council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), effective Jan. 1, 2022. Claassen was unanimously elected during the Synod's recent Assembly, held virtually. He succeeds the Rev. Susan Faye Wonderland, whose contract is expiring after 13 years with the Synod, including the last seven-plus years as transitional executive.

"When I think about what Trinity has called me to do, I see a convergence," Claassen said. "All sorts of ministry experiences over the last 25-plus years have led to this." Claassen is a graduate of Stanford University, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in psychology, and Princeton Theological Seminary, where he earned a Master of Divinity. Prior to his service in Los Ranchos, Claassen served as stated clerk of the Presbytery of the Inland Northwest from 2009 to 2013, pastor at Clarkston (WA) Presbyterian Church from 2005 to 2013, co-pastor to a tri-cultural congregation in Southeast Alaska, stated supply minister for a Haida village church in the Presbytery of Alaska for five years, moderator and then chair of General Council of the Presbytery of Alaska, and commissioner to the 212<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Long Beach, CA.

"We are grateful for the leadership of Rev. Susan Wonderland, who has been pivotal in helping our presbyteries address current issues facing modern churches," Synod Co-Moderators Martha Jordan and Charles Best said in a joint statement. "We are looking forward to working with Rev. Forrest Claassen as we continue to explore how to be innovative as the Body of Christ."

Claassen's wife, Karen, is also a pastor in the PC(USA), currently serving the First Presbyterian Church in Downey, CA. Their daughter Margaret, her husband Dalton, and their 1-year-old baby, Miles, live in Portland, OR.

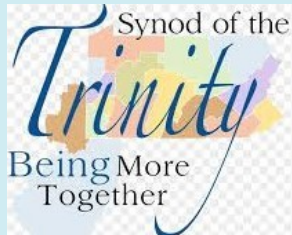
"I look forward to watching the Synod of the Trinity from afar as Forrest steps in to continue the work that has been underway here and to add his own special flair to that ministry," Wonderland said. "It has been an honor to serve amidst such a committed and faith-filled group of colleagues in this region, and to do so with the support of a creative and kingdom facing staff team."

The Synod of the Trinity, created in 1717 and the oldest synod in the PC(USA), comprises 16 presbyteries in Pennsylvania, most of West Virginia and part of Ohio. Those presbyteries include 1,046 churches and 132,348 members, making it one of the largest in the denomination.



- "Faith Foundations Beneath Our Presbyterian Polity" - December 11, 2021

These workshops begin at 12:30 p.m. and will be a hybrid offering by ZOOM and at the Redstone Presbytery Center. To register, contact Bobbie at Redstone Presbytery at 724.837.6737 or [secretary@redstonepresbytery.org](mailto:secretary@redstonepresbytery.org).



**Mark Your Calendars for Saturday, November 13th!**  
**a zoom gathering with Rev. Dr. Alonzo Johnson,**  
**PCUSA**

**Called out to Serve: Living Out our Missional Identity  
in Christ – YES, Even During Covid.**

**9:30 am-11:30 am** *Matthew 25 and Self-Development of People challenge us to see the world and be in relationships right where we are, and not just far away. Using examples from Black Presbyterian missional trailblazers such as Thelma Adair, Gayraud Wilmore and Edler Hawkins, this interactive workshop will equip participants with missional strategies centered around identity, discipleship, relationship building and asset mapping to create and leverage congregational/communal power in engaging issues in the local church!*

**11:45 am-12:15 pm** Rev. Dr. Alonzo Johnson and Margaret Mwale from SDOP will talk briefly about the **ministry of SDOP** and how you and your Presbyteries can be engaged.

Click [HERE](#) to Read More and Register

Presbyterian Outlook, a great publication for connecting our denomination, offers subscribers a wealth of resources delivered electronically each week. They include Uniform Lesson helps, Sunday liturgies, Christian Ed lessons, and exegesis of weekly lections. Find out more at [pres-outlook.org](http://pres-outlook.org). Subscription costs are very reasonable.



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*Communicate the  
Word...*

*Carry on the Work...*

*Change the World...*

*Together*

