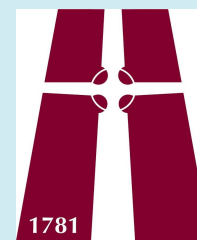


Presbytery of Redstone eNews

December 15, 2021



Please pray for...

District 1 Churches

~~First Presbyterian Church, Murrysville, Ed Gray, Pastor
~~Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church, Murrysville, Curtis Paul, Pastor;
Travis Webster, Associate Pastor

District 2 Churches

~~Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensburg, Bill Youmans,
Interim Pastor
~~First Presbyterian Church, Irwin, Ron Wakeman, Pastor

District 3 Churches

~~Tyrone Presbyterian Church, Dawson, Tony Marciano,
Commissioned Pastor
~~First Presbyterian Church, Dunbar, Aleda Menchyk, Moderator

District 4 Churches

~~First Presbyterian Church, Ebensburg, Owar Ojulu, Pastor
~~Bethany Presbyterian Church, Johnstown, Denise Todero,
Commissioned Pastor

ADVENT - PREPARE AND PRAY



PREPARE

In another gospel, Philip tells his brother about the important discovery of “him about whom Moses in the Law and prophets wrote.” When told it is Jesus of Nazareth, Nathanael seems anything, but impressed. Skeptically, he raises the direct question that more polite respondents would not ask; “can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

By all normal standards, Nazareth was a small town of no particular significance. Until now. Gabriel is sent to find a betrothed virgin named Mary in this out of the way place. Unlike when he was sent to Zechariah (a priest of the order of Abijah) and Elizabeth (a descendant of Aaron), the angel comes to a young girl with no particular honor. The promise of favor was not based upon

anything other than God's own choosing and grace.

"In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary."(Luke 1:26-7)

As might be expected, Mary's responds with astonishment at what it might mean that she was the "favored one." Even more, the expectations of others nearby and around the country would certainly not expect much "good" to come from Nazareth nor a young woman of such stature. Yet, in the promise of God delivered by Gabriel, Mary discovered its meaning. Her "favor." She had been chosen for a special role, serving as God's providential servant to bring into the world the One who would be king. Ultimately, she understands that God's favor has come to rest even in Nazareth of all places, even upon a young woman yet to marry.

PRAYER

Almighty God, we know that our expectations are often not your ways. Your grace is made known in the most surprising places and with the most unpredicted people. Draw us near to see and hear you according to your own word. May we know your promise fulfilled in your willingness to come to us and for us as a king born not in status or power, but in humility. Amen.



LONGEST NIGHT/BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE: Join us and invite your friends and family for First Presbyterian Belle Vernon's Longest Night/ Blue Christmas service on Saturday, December 18th at 4 pm, a time of healing and peace. The holidays, with all of their hype and noise, are sometimes too much to handle when we are grieving. Coinciding with

the winter solstice, the longest night service is a time to rest, worship, and find hope even in the midst of the craziness of the holidays. All are welcome to attend.

FIRST FRUIT PLEDGES FOR 2022 REMINDER

It may be appropriate to think of your commitment as a tithe (10%) of your expenditures in ministry. Or, if want to share in costs proportionally based upon membership, it would mean that each congregation should support at least at a level of \$43/member. Many congregations can and do exceed that amount. We ask that you prayerfully consider your investment of the Lord's resources in this partnership by increasing your pledge from previous years in order that our shared ministry and mission might be enhanced as we pursue God's vision for our region. A 2022 "commitment form" for sending in your "First Fruits" and "extra commitment" pledges for special offerings is attached. After prayerful consideration, please return the form to the Presbytery office in order that we might plan effectively.



REMINDER!! Annual Year-End Report forms for the year 2021 have been distributed to Clerks of Session. Most of these reports are submitted to the Presbytery office. All of these reports may not be



applicable in all cases. If you desire, you may submit the reports to the Presbytery of Redstone through the forms on the web page (<http://redstonepresbytery.org/clerk-of-session-annual-report>). Otherwise, the hard copies may be mailed by the appropriate date to the Presbytery office. You may also scan them and email them

(secretary@redstonepresbytery.org). The ***Necrology report*** should be submitted by January 10, 2022 so that the departed saints may be honored at the Service of Remembrance at the January 29, 2022 Presbytery meeting. All other Presbytery reports are to be returned no later than ***March 1, 2022***. The ***Annual Statistical Report to General Assembly*** is filed electronically using the instructions that were sent to you. Please submit your electronic report to General Assembly no later than February 18, 2022. [*The system will close at midnight; please don't wait until the last minute or site "traffic" may lock you out.*] If you have questions about filing this report electronically, or need assistance in completing it, please call either Bobbie or Skip as soon as possible at the Presbytery office (724-837-6737). Please make sure your rolls have been "cleaned" and fill in this report with complete 2021 data as soon as possible. With the report already completed, you will be able to hit "submit" upon approval of the Session (prior to February 18, 2022).

The dates and locations have been set for three of the five Presbytery meetings in 2022. The dates are:

- January 29, 2022 - 1:00 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, Greensburg
- March 22, 2022 - 6:00 p.m. Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon
- May 24, 2022 - LOCATION AND TIME TO BE DETERMINED
- September 27, 2022 - LOCATION AND TIME TO BE DETERMINED
- November 19, 2022 - 9:00 a.m. Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church, Murrysville



All of these meetings will be hybrid meetings with both in-person and Zoom options. If any church would be willing to host the in-person portion of the May or September meeting, please contact Skip at the Presbytery office (executive@redstonepresbytery.org) (724.837.6737) Thank you!!



We are, once again, beginning the identification and recruitment process for Ruling Elders who are interested in growing in their faith, knowledge and practice to serve either in commissioned roles or in their own local congregation. As a program that operates across presbyteries (Washington, Pittsburgh, UOV, Kiski), those who participate not only have a great opportunity through courses, workshops and supervised practicum experiences, but they also engage with other Ruling Elders

from congregations around the region. If you have a Ruling Elder who God might be calling to do more to serve your congregation or the larger Church, please consider both speaking with them about participation and referring them to [Skip Noftzger](#) for more information.

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.





The Presbytery office will be closed beginning at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 22, 2021 through and including Monday, January 3, 2022. Normal office hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday will resume on Tuesday, January 4, 2022. The Presbytery staff would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

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