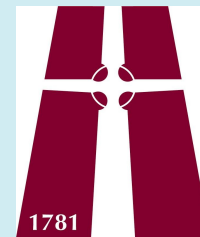


Presbytery of Redstone eNews

February 17, 2022



Please pray for...

District 1 Churches

~~Delmont Presbyterian Church, Anthony Catullo, Interim Pastor

~~Grace Community Presbyterian Church, Lower Burrell, Doug Marshall, Interim Pastor

District 2 Churches

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

~~Sewickley Presbyterian Church, West Newton, Karen Kifer, Commissioned Pastor

District 3 Churches

~~Leisenring Presbyterian Church, Anthony Marciano, Commissioned Pastor

~~First Presbyterian Church, Masontown, Eric Glisan, Commissioned Pastor

District 4 Churches

~~Patton Presbyterian Church, Alice Tondora, Moderator

~~Revloc Presbyterian Church, David O'Hara, Commissioned Pastor



Reclaiming the Cycle---Marks of Vitality-#1

In recent weeks, many of us reconsidered one of those “call” stories in the gospels, where Jesus invites those earliest disciples to follow him. Having spoken and demonstrated a new “kingdom” that is at hand through his teaching and acts of healing, Jesus beckons those earliest followers to come and be with him. Among the multitudes who gathered, there were disciples and “would be” disciples and those merely interested in the miraculous events. Yet, the call of Jesus that came who by God’s spirit had the “ears to hear” was both a challenge and an invitation for a lifetime.

For those earliest disciples, the journey moved from following the itinerant preacher to the confrontations with religious power to a witness of willing suffering and when it all seemed lost a vindication of all that had gone before in resurrected reality. From that time forth, their lifelong discipleship was not merely based in remembrances, though there those. It was not merely collective and renewed practices of piety, though these were present and developed further over the generations that together we might be formed and (re)formed. It was not even just taking up the “cause” of Christ in what Jesus stood for and taught, though that mission challenge is our grace-enabled responsibility as well.

No, it was and is all of those, but as they are “wrapped around” the core identity of lifelong

adventure of following the crucified and resurrected Jesus the Christ. Being a follower of Jesus, then and now, calls us together as God's people was an invitation to both being and becoming a disciple of the living Jesus Christ. Consequently, who we are in churches and communities is integrally connected with how and in what ways we live out that discipleship. More than words or morals, you and I in our faith communities are called to know Jesus, to follow Jesus and to make him known through who we are.

In the "Toolkit for Vital Congregations," the first of those "7 marks" asks us to consider the ways we embody and exhibit this lifelong discipleship and how that relationship with Jesus is fostered and nurtured among us. For ultimately, "vitality" is not about the latest, greatest programs (although they might be helpful). It is not about just encouraging good and right behaviors (even though they may signify faithfulness). Instrumental as those may be, the real question is: Are we calling people new and old to follow Jesus, to be and become Jesus' disciples not just for a moment or for a season, but for a lifetime?

Reflection questions for us as faith communities (selected from the "7 Marks of Vital Congregations"; PCUSA)

- Does Christian formation in your church lead people to change the way they live?
- Does the study of scripture influence the mission and ministry of your church?
- Are faithful habits being translated to daily living?
- As disciples, what uncomfortable things do you need to let go of, truths you need to be aware of, places you are afraid to follow, things you believe God might call you to do?
- How can faithful discipleship become our daily identity instead of just religious piety?
- How do others know we are disciples of Jesus Christ?

REDSTONE PRESBYTERY GROUPS, SUBCOMMITTEES, NETWORKS, AND TEAMS



Redstone Presbytery has several subcommittees, networks, and teams that are "open" to anyone who would like to join them. Because of the Pandemic, most of these groups are currently meeting via zoom video conferencing. Hopefully that will be able to be changed to in person meetings in the near future.

- **The Addictions Ministry** - this group has put together several resources for the fight against addiction of any kind.
- **The Communications Team** - this group is geared to keeping the lines of communication open within the Presbytery. These decisions could include articles/videos on the website, Facebook page, or YouTube channel along with the decisions on the purchases of new and more updated equipment.
- **The Healing Prayer Ministry Network** - this group typically meets the first Thursday of each month from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. at the Presbytery office to pray for the needs of anyone that would request them.
- **The Mission Committee** - this group is in charge of the various missions and mission trips within the Presbytery.
- **The Racial Justice and Reconciliation Task Force** - this group was formed to help the Presbytery shift the systems that do not help bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. They want to study the how, the what, the who of these systems that do not help us be Christ's Kingdom-builders. The Task Force is beginning to meet regularly with the purpose of allowing conversation, reading and discussion, about ways to bring awareness of and help shift these Kingdom-crushing systems that do not bring Christ's Kingdom into reality.

Please contact the Presbytery office (724.837.6737 - secretary@redstonepresbytery.org) if you would be interested in being a part of any of these groups.



for households with children? Have you seen author and pastor Traci Smith's newest book, *Faithful Families for Lent, Easter, and Resurrection*? The Office of Christian Formation has partnered with Chalice Press and Traci Smith so that PC(USA) formation leaders can receive a discount of 50% off 5 or 10 copies of the book to share with those you serve. There will also be a "[Faith at Home](#)" [Lent Practices Webinar](#) on February 24 at 3:00 p.m. EST with Traci Smith, who will talk about simple practices for at-home faith formation during Lent. Six short videos will be released for use by households, highlighting our five faith practices of storytelling, hospitality, service, prayer, and retreat.

RESTORING CREATION LOANS available at discounted interest rates and with flexible loan terms from the Investment & Loan Program of our Presbyterian Church (USA), can multiply your church's saving. These loans encourage your congregation to renovate your church building using renewable energy resources and energy-efficient products. High efficiency heating/cooling systems, LED lighting, energy efficient roofing systems, and solar panel installations are just a few ways these Restoring Creation Loan dollars may be used. Find more at pilp.pcusa.org



PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!

The 2021 Session Minutes and Church Register review dates have been set.

Tuesday, March 22, 2022 - 5:00 p.m. - Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, Belle Vernon. This is prior to the Presbytery meeting being held there that evening beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 20, 2022 - 5:00 p.m. - Uniontown Area (exact location TBD)

Wednesday, May 11, 2022 - 5:00 p.m. - Redstone Presbytery Center, 1004 Mt. Pleasant Road, Greensburg

Tuesday, May 24, 2022 - 5:00 p.m. - Location TBD - This will be prior to the Presbytery meeting being held that evening.

I am attaching the checklists for you to prepare for this review.

[Session Minutes Checklist](#)

[Church Register Checklist](#)

DAY OF LEARNING PLANNED GIVING

Join the Presbyterian Foundation for a free, online Day of Learning with presentations and conversations about planned giving programs and best practices for your congregation. This learning opportunity will take place on March 29 and will feature the following presentations:



Good, Better, Best: Right-sized Planned Giving Program with Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley, Ministry Relations Officer of the Allegheny and Chesapeake Region, and Karl Mattison, Vice President for Planned Giving Resources

Having the Talk and Making the Ask with Olanda Carr, Senior Ministry Relations Officer of the East Region, and Rev. Dr. Brandi Casto-Waters of Reed Memorial Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia.

TIME: Tuesday, March 29

10:00am PT/1:00pm ET - Good, Better, Best: Right-sized Planned Giving Program

1:00pm PT/4:00pm ET - Having the Talk and Making the Ask

TO REGISTER: Visit presbyterianfoundation.org/dolregistration

If you can't attend live, please register and we will send you the recordings for both sessions afterwards.

For more information, please email serving@presbyterianfoundation.org.



From Congregational Resistance to Resourcefulness Samaritan Clergy Workshops

Two Thursday Workshops: March 31st and April 7th

Churches have always resisted change, but it's become worse due to the pandemic and polarization, leading churches into steeper decline. Frustrated pastors are changing churches and leaving ministry. Some churches are being held hostage by dysfunctional lay leaders. Yet churches have to change if we're to stave off deep decline and congregational death.

Rooted in insights from individual, group, and family systems therapy, organizational psychology, spiritual formation, and 34 years of experience in turning around and growing churches and organizations, the Rev. Dr. Graham Standish will offer pragmatic guidance for church leaders on transforming resistance into resourceful change. [Click here](#) for more information and registration.

The Redstone Presbytery Mission group is planning a trip to Summersville, WV, April 24th through the 30th. If you would be interested in being a part of this trip or need more information, please contact Phyllis Frye, pfrye1234@windstream.net.



CALLING ALL WOMEN - you are invited to the Presbyterian Women's Regional Gathering. Please find more information by [clicking here](#).

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