

Presbytery of Redstone eNews

June 6, 2024



Please pray for...

District 1 Churches

~~Union Presbyterian Church, Murrysville, Robert Ruefle, Pastor,
~~ Community United Presbyterian Church, New Alexandria, Len Morgan, Commissioned Pastor

District 2 Churches

~~Derry Presbyterian Church, Larry Armstrong, Covenant Pastor
~~ First Presbyterian Church, Greensburg, Martin Ankrum, Pastor

District 3 Churches

~~McClellandtown Presbyterian Church, Rebecca Abbott, Pastor
~~ Dunlap's Creek Presbyterian Church, Merrittstown, Lee McDermott, Moderator

District 4 Churches

~~Revloc Presbyterian Church, David O'Hara, Commissioned Pastor
~~United Presbyterian Church, Bolivar, James Sunseri, Commissioned Pastor



We Belong Together-Practices of Grace in Redstone

As I anticipate the end of my tenure in this calling at Redstone Presbytery, I have begun to reflect upon some of my own thoughts about what it means to a presbytery together. Some “prompts” include going back and re-reading various Enews articles from days gone by. Though often aspirational, my understanding of who we are and who we hope to be as Redstone Presbytery has been validated in so many ways over the years. One of those core tenets remains that we belong to

each other in Christ and therefore should exhibit practices of grace in our words, our structures, our policies and ways of being.

All of us some need to “belong.” Sometimes, we fill that need with family or groups of different kinds. In our day of individual consumer choice, we can “trade in” one kind of group for another, but we

cannot always find or retain that sense of belonging. In her book, *Living into Community*, Christine Pohl acknowledges:

"while we readily recognize the ways in which the larger culture challenges Christian beliefs and commitments, we don't always notice how profoundly our expectations, desires and practices are also shaped by our culture. We bring the values of self-actualization, individual success, consumption and personal freedom--- and the choices that result from them – to church life, just as we bring them into family and work."

I might add that this can be true within presbyteries as communities as well.

The Scriptures speak of the Church in various images and metaphors, yet what remains consistent among them is the place and belonging of those who are part of it. Not merely as an expression of some ideal, but as a real image unto which we are challenged to live in Christ AND with each other. Within the pages of the New Testament, we find proclaimed our necessary and integral connection to one another. We also hear the backdrop to such challenges in the realities of lives being lived that somehow fell short. On the other side of the conversation to which many of the epistles are addressed, we know and identify with our own contemporary versions of difficulty, conflict and discouragement.

Yet, in spite of our failures before God and with each other, the tangible calling of our belonging together as a presbytery should be reflected in "practices of grace." Drawing upon the work of Dykstra and Bass, Christine Pohl notes:

"every community has practices that hold it together; for Christians, practices can also be understood as responses to the grace we have already experienced in Christ, in light of the word and work of God, for the sake of one another and the world. "

These are practices that are part of the everyday, normal living of life with each other. They may be behaviors that we take for granted that they should be the case (particularly in the church), nonetheless, they often become "watered down" or even ignored. As a presbytery, we are responsible to and for one another. In that connection together, one congregation to one another, there exists a need for structures and policies as expressions of our attempts at faithful life together. It has been and remains my greatest desire that as a presbytery, our actions of challenge and support, governance and development, sharing ministry and mission would be expressions of our practices of grace one to another based upon the Lord's grace to us.

"Good communities and life-giving congregations emerge at the intersection of divine grace and steady human effort." (Christine Pohl; *Living into Community*)

Soli Deo Gloria!

Pray for the Congregation of the Week ([Facebook](#))

Each week a different ministry of one of our congregations is featured on the Presbytery Facebook page

(<https://www.facebook.com/PresbyteryofRedstone>) Look for your friends and colleagues in ministry and intercede on their behalf with the Lord for what God has called them to be and do.



Summer
READING

You're invited to the racial reconciliation group's Zoom book club

All discussions will take place at 6:30PM

June 13 *Night* by Eli Wiesel
July 11 *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
August 8 *Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride

Email secretary@redstonepresbytery.org to register

Zoom login:
Meeting #: 7248376737
Password: Redstone

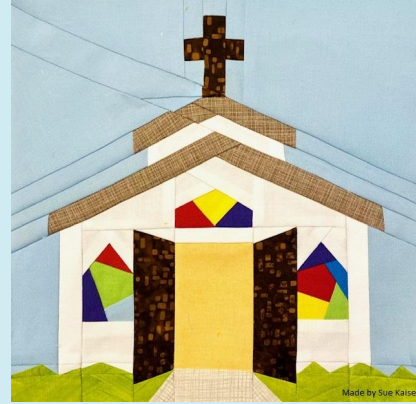
The Mission Network of the Presbytery of Redstone

will be sponsoring a **"Mission Fair"** again for our congregations at the September Presbytery Meeting at Pine Springs Camp. We are asking you to prepare to share local, regional, national or international projects in which your church is engaged or supports. You will have the opportunity to display any objects, flyers, information, etc. at a exhibit table before and during the Presbytery gathering. So, plan now for what you would like to share about where God has led you in mission.



if you have a **"Quilting group"** in your congregation or just some individuals who engage in quilting, we are looking for churches to bring one or more squares

(10.5 x 10.5) that represent any or some of the mission areas of the church. Each square might also have the name off the congregation on it as well. These squares will be combined into a quilt along with other symbols of the Presbytery to form a quilt that will be on display at the Presbytery and particular events.



Please contact either **Debby Koenig - (debkoenig@wpa.net)** or **Rev. Skip Noftzger - (noftzger@gmail.com)** if you need any additional information.

Please plan on turning in your finished squares no later than Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at the Presbytery Meeting hosted by Pine Springs Camp.



Are you a Ruling Elder who is interested in Learning and Growing in you Faith even more?

Is God Possibly Calling you to Preach?

CONSIDER ENROLLING IN THE INTER-PRESBYTERY LEADERSHIP FORMATION PROGRAM.

For more Information about the program and Enrollment, Please Contact Skip Noftzger at the Presbytery Office 724-837-6737 or executive@redstonepresbytery.org

WEE KIRK 2024

Wee Kirk early bird registrations (lower price) are open. Taking place on October 14-16. Don't miss this important opportunity for learning, renewal and retreat. Sign up now at wee-kirk-ne.org

The Presbytery will be doing a bulk order for the 2024/2025 **Planning Calendars**. Calendars begin in September again this year. The bulk order rate per calendar will be \$10.50 this year. If you would like to get in on the bulk rate deal please complete the **order form** and email it or mail it with your payment to the Presbytery office. **The deadline for orders will be August 2, 2024** in order to have them for distribution at the September meeting. Thank you!



2024-2025 Presbyterian Planning Calendar

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)



Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School season is here!

[Click Here](#) to view the list of churches in Redstone Presbytery that have their plans made for this year.

Are you hosting VBS at your Church? If so, please send the information to the presbytery office or email secretary@redstonepresbytery.org.

We will publish the list in up coming eNews with the possibility of sharing resources.

Church Financial Leadership Grants Available Now

If you are a pastor, commissioned ruling elder (CRE), a leader of a 1001 New Worshiping Community or a member of a stewardship team we have Church Financial Leadership Grants available for you. The grants will enable you to institute best practices for church financial leadership, introduce you to new models of giving and stewardship, and offer you new ways to talk about money and form generous disciples within your church.

Who can apply?

- PCUSA pastors
- Commissioned Ruling Elders
- 1001 New Worshiping Community leaders
- Church member attending the event with their pastor

What do the funds cover?

The grants are matching funds to help cover half of the cost of:

- Registration fees
- Transportation
- Lodging
- Meals
- Other expenses

The other half of the funds will need to be provided by the church or another source.

What events can I use the funds for?

- Stewardship Kaleidoscope
- Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising (ECRF) through the Lake Institute
- Other church financial leadership events (subject to approval)

What is the deadline?

For Stewardship Kaleidoscope, we are asking that applications be sent in by Monday, August 12 so that we have time to process the application and send out the funds prior to the start of the event. Applications received after the deadline or for the ECRF program will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Once we receive your application, it may take up to six weeks to process.

APPLY NOW

If you have questions, please email serving@presbyterianfoundation.org and we'll be glad to help.



First Presbyterian Church of Avonmore

hosted their first Blessing in the Animals on June 2. They partnered with Little Blessings Farm and Petting Zoo and they brought farm animals. It was a huge success and enjoyed by all in attendance. Pet food and cash were donated to Action for Animals Humane Society of Latrobe.



What Can Pastors Say to Graduates?

The following [“think-piece”](#) by Jim Farrer and the Healing Prayer Ministry Network to our preachers It is an attempt at graduation season to help bring reconciliation between skeptical teens and “twenty-somes” and the church.



Unity Cemetery & Chapel 250th Anniversary Celebration

Honoring Our Past, Inspiring Our Future

For more information [Click Here](#) for upcoming events or visit unitycemeterychapel.org

“Paraments; Looking for a Good Home”

First Presbyterian Church, Irwin has a couple sets of paraments that they are not using. If your congregation is interested in having them, please contact the church at: 724-863-5910 or office@firstpresbyirwin.org.



MINISTER ID CARDS from PC(USA) are now available at the Presbytery Office. Please pick yours up when you visit the office for a meeting or if you are in the area during office hours. (Monday - Thursday 9am - 2pm)

If you have any questions, please email me or call.

Karen Gray
Administrative Operations Manager
secretary@redstonepresbytery.org
724-837-6737 - Office

PRESBYTERY UPCOMING EVENTS

Town Wide Yard Sale June 8, 2024 - Community United Presbyterian Church of New Alexandria. As you do “Spring Cleaning” and have items you would like to donate, we are now scheduling times for drop-off. Please call Pete, Margaret or Marsha to schedule a time. Sorry, we cannot accept TV’s, computers or electronics.

Pete 724-668-7979
Marsha 724-639-9610
Margaret 724-668-7975

Community Yard Sale - Derry Presbyterian Church is Participating in Derry's Great Garage Sale! Friday and Saturday, August 2nd and 3rd.
For additional information [Click Here](#)

Upcoming Events Outside Redstone Presbytery

NEW WILMINGTON MISSION CONFERENCE - July 19-24 at Westminster College. The longest-running Christian mission-focused event in the United States. The theme this year is based on Romans 14:19: “Make peace and build one another up.” The conference provides a wide range of programs designed to inspire individuals of all ages. Mission-driven individuals, pastors, congregations, youth groups and mission workers connect with each other, worship together and gain a deeper understanding of mission. For more information and to register, [click here](#)

Presbyterian Youth and Triennium - July 28-31, 2025 in Louisville, KY at the Kentucky International Convention Center

WOMEN'S CONNECTION 2024 - Aug. 9-11 at Montreat Conference Center, NC. “In the Arms of God,” you’ll have the chance to retreat from the day to day, take a deep breath of the Spirit, gather in community with other women of faith, and leave with a heart full of hope. Women’s Connection 2024 will be a time for women to connect with old and new friends, a time to care for yourself; a time for space and Sabbath. [Learn more](#)

Stewardship Kaleidoscope - Real Tools for Real Ministry September 23-25, 2024 in Portland OR.
For more information visit stewardshipkaleidoscope.org

PC(USA) Pastors - Learn about the Church Financial Leadership Grant Program through the Foundation [here](#)

2024 EVANGELISM CONFERENCE - Oct. 3-5. Registration for the 2024 Evangelism Conference, planned by Theology, Formation & Evangelism, is now open. "A Lifestyle That Exudes Justice" Evangelism Conference will be held at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky. [Learn more and register](#)

Tell Us About God's Mission in Your Congregation - The Mission Network of Redstone Presbytery is gathering information on the local; regional and international mission projects of our congregations. Knowing and sharing this information will provide opportunities to connect together for collaboration and greater impact. Go to <https://forms.gle/AEdEwn8eeGVqvm9w5> and tell us about where you are following God into mission.



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Office Hours:

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Communicate the Word...

Carry on the Work...

Change the World...

Together

Presbytery of Redstone
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