

## Special points of interest:

- Lent Bible Study
- Lent Devotional
- Union Sunday
- Much more...

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## A Message from our General Presbyter

### A Point of Personal Privilege

It goes without saying that we are living in unprecedented times. The pandemic has forced us to think creatively in our worship and ministry. And I applaud you all as you have worked to meet and exceed the challenge. But the events of January 6<sup>th</sup> disturbed me deeply. I was born in Washington D.C.; I was part of the crowd that lined the streets when President Kennedy's caisson went from the White House to the Capitol to lie in state. I stood in the long line at the Capitol to go into the rotunda to pay my respects to the unknown soldier from Vietnam. I visited my congressman in the capitol on a Girl Scout field trip.

All of this is to say that never would I have thought that American citizens would willfully come to the Nations Capitol for the purpose of destruction and harm. But it happened, and for those who say "this is not us", I have to differ and say "this is not who we want to be, but it is us". Unfortunately, we have allowed rhetoric to fuel division in our nation, but I believe, as I always have, that there is far more that unites us than divides us. As Presbyterians we are taught that "people of good characters and principles may differ" but that we exercise mutual forbearance toward each other. (Book of Order, F-3.0105)

As people of faith, we say that we believe we are all made in the image of God. That includes everyone, no exceptions, and so we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. My prayer is that the congregations of this presbytery will share and show the love of God to their communities and to one another, that the members of our congregations will work to live out the great commandment of Christ in their daily lives, that we can be a part of the Lord's light that shines in the darkness and work for the wholeness of all people. This is still the beginning of the new year – let us work to make it a good one.

*Blessings,  
Bronwen*



## Stated Presbytery Meeting Feb 27

The 188th Stated Meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery will be held on Saturday, February 27, 2021, at 9:30 am via Zoom.

Please mark your calendars and watch for registration information, along with the Handbook for the Meeting.

## Practice Session Feb 23

We will also be holding a practice meeting on Tuesday, February 23 at 7:00 pm. This is for those new to Zoom or who need a refreshment of the instructions.

## Presbytery Staff

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Larry Holsinger, Treasurer

## Associate General Presbyter—Nancy Meehan Yao

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, this year on February 17. This will be the second Lenten season we have spent in pandemic.

On Ash Wednesday, traditionally, congregations met for a solemn service of prayer, Scripture, preparation for Lent, and the imposition of ashes, with the words “you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” They are a sign of mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only through the gracious gift of Jesus Christ that we are given eternal life.



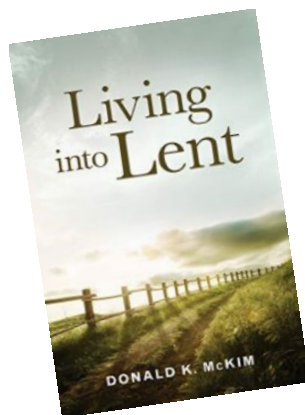
Last year, last Lent, we thought the pandemic would be over...by Easter...by Mother's Day...at the end of the summer. And while scientists have made progress in developing a vaccine, the numbers still continue to rise, deaths continue upward, ICU's and hospitals are over-full. We cannot join in corporate worship to impose ashes- there is just no safe way to do so. We know, now, in ways we did not know before, how precious and fragile humans are, the fact of our mortality thrust at us with every evening news or COVID tele-conference. But that does not mean those words about dust and mortality and grace are any less true.

After the imposition of ashes, the congregations prays: “Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation, that we may show forth your glory in the world. By the cross and passion of our Savior, bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection. Amen.”

May it be so, and may you have a blessed Lenten-tide.  
Blessings, Nancy

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### Living Into Lent- A Bible Study by Donald K McKim



We will be reading and discussing Donald McKim's *Living into Lent* as a Zoom Bible Study, noon- 1 pm, Wednesday 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24 and 3/31.

Books may be purchased through The PC(USA) Store: <https://www.pcusastore.com/Products/0664265405/living-into-lent.aspx>, but study guides will be sent out each week.

To register, please contact Donna at the Presbytery office: [shenpres@shenpres.org](mailto:shenpres@shenpres.org), and she will send you the materials and the Zoom link for the class.

## Faithful Ideas for Lent in a Virtual World

### Ash Wednesday-

Ash Wednesday, (this year February 17) is the start of Lent. Many faith communities meet for a service of worship, repentance, and preparation. Often this includes the imposition of ashes, a reminder of mourning, repentance, and our mortality.

In this season of pandemic, in person, imposition of ashes is not recommended- not even with Q-tips, gloved hands, or outdoor worship. Many faith leaders and educators are turning to ways to support families in at home worship.

If you send ashes home for people to use, PLEASE remind them that ashes should be mixed with OIL- not water, as ash + water = lye, and will burn the skin.

Others are leaning on the “dust/dirt” part of our understanding, that humans are made both of the dirt of the earth and the breath of God—and sending home bags of potting soil and seeds, to be planted at the beginning of Lent, and bloom 40 days later- at Easter.

**Here are some ideas for Lenten at home devotions.**

#### A 40 Day Lenten Activity Chain

Make a paper chain, with purple (days of Lent) and yellow strips of paper (Sundays in Lent), 47 strips of paper in total. Each week will have 6 purple links, then 1 yellow (for Sunday) except for the week beginning with Ash Wednesday- that will have 4 purple, and 1 yellow. Write simple activities to do during those days: pray for a friend, give/send a postcard to a shut in, fast from junk food, sing a song of praise, etc. Make the paper chain, then each day take off a link to do the activity.

#### Lent in a Bag-

There are many variations on this- See <https://buildfaith.org/lent-in-a-bag/>

And <https://www.stmartininthefields.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Lent-in-a-Bag-Instruction-and-Devotion-2015.pdf>

#### Pocket Prayers and Hand Labyrinths

Pocket Prayers are like a prayer quilt or shawl, you keep in your pocket- Also, the book *Pocket Prayers* by Max Lucado

**Hand Labyrinths-** a tool for prayer and contemplation. May be made of wood, ceramic, or fabric. Fabric: using embroidery floss and pattern of a simple labyrinth



**Lenten Activity Calendar-** (See next page)

#### Books for Lent for Children and Families

*Make Room- a Children's Guide for Lent and Easter-* by Laura Alary

*The Tale of Three Trees-* folktale

*God Gave Us Easter* by Lisa Tawn Bergren

*God's Easter Gifts* by Brenda Castro

*Humphrey's First Palm Sunday* by Carol Heyer

*The Donkey that No One Could Ride* by Anthony DeStefano

*The Parable of the Lily* by Liz Curtis Higgs

*The Easter Cave* by Carol Wedevan

#### Resources For Adult Study

Lent of Liberation by Cheri L. Mills




A Sanctified Art- visual resources, devotionals and liturgy

<https://sanctifiedart.org/again-and-again-lent-bundle-year-b>

Lenten Devotions from the Presbyterian Outlook

<https://pres-outlook.org/2020/12/2021-lenten-devotions-from-the-presbyterian-outlook/>



<b>40 Days of Lent</b>	Activities for families based on 3 Lenten Activities- Give Fast Pray	<b>Ash Wednesday</b> Make the Sign of the Cross on your forehead 	Buy the "Alleluia" - write the word Alleluia on a piece of paper, and put it away. We will take it out again on Easter.	People often give up eating meat on Fridays in Lent- prepare a meatless meal!	What will you give up for Lent?	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent-</b> worship with your family
Pray for your family	Go outside and thank God for creation.	Today, fast (give up) from thinking bad thoughts about others.	Give your time to others- offer to do a chore for a family member	Fast from eating drive-thru.	Take a deep breath in and out. Give thanks to God.	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent-</b> Tell someone a Bible story you know
Pray while taking a walk outdoors.	Fast from raising your voice.	Give/send a note to a neighbor	Pray for someone you don't know.	Fast from complaining.	Go for a walk or a run, or jump rope. With every step, think "Thank you" "Jesus"	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent-</b> pray for your church family
Fast from watching tv.	Give a hug to someone in your family.	Fast from fighting with your siblings.	Pray each time you see a sign of Spring	Fast from snacking.	Pray for people who are hungry.	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent-</b> As a family, sing a hymn together
Fast from video games/	Give time to read a story about Jesus	Give groceries to a food pantry.	Pray for your pastor.	Fast from arguing.	Give someone a sincere compliment- tell them what you appreciate about them	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent-</b> Share a reason you are thankful to God
Give a smile to someone today.	Pray for peace in the world.	Fast from trying to go first.	Give someone a phone or zoom call, to tell them how much you love them.	Pray for people who need a home.	Fast from buying/wanting something you don't need.	<b>Palm Sunday-</b> make some leaves out of paper, shout "Hosanna!" for Jesus 
Fast from being cranky.	Perhaps you know someone who has died. Give thanks to God for their life.	Pray for someone you dislike, or who has been meant to you.	<b>Mundy Thursday</b> On this day, we remember Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples. Read John 13: 1-17	<b>Good Friday</b> On this day, we remember Jesus' death on the cross. Read John 18: 1-19-42	Some people call this <b>Silent Saturday</b> . Read what Jesus' friends did on this day. Matthew 27: 57-61	<b>Easter Sunday</b> Find your Alleluia! Paper, say it out loud- Jesus is Risen! Alleluia! 

Presbyterian Mission, through *Presbyterians Today*, is offering a Lenten devotional for free. Below is an introduction from the author, Jimmie Hawkin.

For more information, or to download the entire devotional, go to: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/lent2021/>

## The Way to Shalom

### *A Lenten Journey to Peace and Wholeness*

Lent is a time of spiritual renewal. It is a season of preparation during the 40 days and six Sundays before Easter. Lent is a time when we reflect upon the love of God and the gift of God's grace. It has a solemn beginning with Ash Wednesday, which is on Feb. 17 this year. On that day, with burnt palm branches crushed into ashes smudged onto foreheads, we are reminded that "from dust you came and to dust you shall return."

But Lent is not a time to wallow in worry about God's wrath. It is not a time of anxiety about our sinfulness or worth. Lent is a time of reflection on what God has done to redeem us and how we can live a whole and full life as a child of God. The Apostle Paul counsels us in Philippians 4: "Have no anxiety about anything" (RSV).

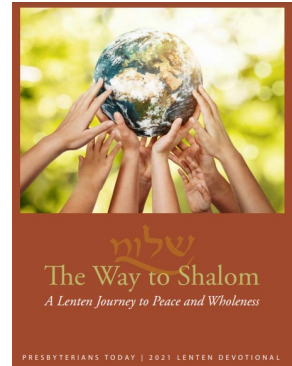
#### **A different Lenten focus for 2021**

While Lent is a time for prayer, fasting, service and contemplation, at the top of our list should be a prayer for the acquisition of peace. This year for the season of Lent, we invite you to reflect upon the gift of *shalom*, the Hebrew word for peace. In the Bible, shalom can be translated not only as peace, but also as tranquility, security, well-being, health, welfare, completeness and safety. How can we receive this gift of shalom and, in turn, bestow it upon the world?

In Israel, shalom is both a greeting and a farewell. When greeted by "shalom," it is a form of hopeful blessing that you are filled with God's perfect peace and well-being. It is a prayer that you will have health, prosperity and peace of mind and spirit. Shalom denotes fullness and perfection, an overflowing joy that moves from your innermost being and is expressed in the way you live your life and engage with others.

To obtain peace, though, we must explore the full extent of its meaning. The search for shalom must examine it as relational, connectional and communal. It is relational wherein my peace cannot be achieved if others are denied what makes them whole. It recognizes that what impacts you impacts me. It is connectional in that it begins with a recognition that we are children of God created "in the image and likeness of God." Shalom is communal in that it builds community and enables us to live as one. Scripture proclaims the need for shalom. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, blesses us: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives" (John 14:27a).

This Lent, let us make our way to shalom — a gift that will bless one another and the world. — *Jimmie Hawkin*



## Presbyterian Minister Appointed Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives

Retired Navy Rear Adm. Margaret Grun Kibben was recently appointed as chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives. She is a Presbyterian minister who graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary.

*Thank you to Reed Hopkins, Pastor at Loch Willow Church, for sharing this news*



## Cautious In-Person Worship at Zetta

Zetta has been holding in-person worship since July. When the weather was warm, we gathered outside to sing some hymns together before going inside. Even when we went inside, we kept the doors and windows open and we all wore our masks.

Since the weather has turned cold and we have not been able to keep the doors and windows open, our additional measures to help decrease our chances of spreading the virus have become even more important. First, we sit well apart from each other. Since the sanctuary will hold 70, but we normally have fewer than 20 present, maintaining distance is not too difficult. Worship is fairly short, usually 35 to 40 minutes. We don't sing anything, and the only things that we even say are the Prayer of Confession, the Lord's Prayer, and the Confession of Faith. A few folks may speak a little to share joys and concerns as we move toward the Pastoral Prayer.

Candace does play two hymns, but, as mentioned, we don't sing them. The lyrics are in the bulletin and congregants read the words and contemplate them while the hymns are played. Candace only plays two verses, helping keep our time indoors short.

We remain seated throughout worship, only standing for the Charge and Benediction.

Even with these measures in place, several folks have been refraining from attending worship. These are mostly folks who interact with the public more, and want to be as cautious as possible about bringing in the virus and spreading it unknowingly. Almost every Sunday afternoon, Pastor Stan takes copies of the bulletin to the folks who were not in worship and visits for a few minutes, usually on the porch.

We don't like having to adhere to these measures. Especially, we would love to be able to sing, making a joyful noise unto the Lord. However, we know that the above is what we need to do in order to love our neighbors well and not spread the virus to them. We know that we are particularly blessed to be able to worship in person at all!

We are grateful to God for, among our many blessings, the fact that vaccines are being deployed, and we hope and pray that we will soon (maybe before the end of 2021?) be able to get back to hugging each other, singing, fellowship meals and other aspects of our community of faith that we miss.

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## Third Presbyterian Church in Staunton

Third Presbyterian Church in Staunton is holding services and has been since June. First in the fellowship Hall and then we moved into the sanctuary for Advent. Only to shut down for one Sunday as a family came down with the virus. But amidst all this we had a baby baptism. Praise the Lord. Other than the continued partnership with First Baptist in Staunton of the food for the hungry and Meal on Wheels the mission outreach is not as robust as always.

*Darlene Mason*

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## Moorefield Presbyterian Church Seeks Choir Director/Accompanist

Moorefield Presbyterian Church is seeking an accompanist / choir director. The position includes playing for Sunday morning worship (11 am), and leading/accompanying choir rehearsal during the week. For more information, please contact Pastor Jim Yao (304-530-2307) or Elder Adam Homan (304-703-5455).



## Greetings from the Shenandoah Presbytery PW Coordinating Team

We have held several meetings in 2020 virtually and one this year already to work on ways to better serve the Presbyterian Women (PW) within the Shenandoah Presbytery.

Communication is a key piece of what your Coordinating Team does to make sure information is shared within the Shenandoah PW Community. It has been a challenge to gather and share this information since many churches within the various Mission Communities are small and lack active PW groups within their churches. Communication efforts have focused mailings, emails, and direct phone calls from the Mission Coordinators to representatives from the churches. Response to our communication efforts varies within the various churches. To complicate matters, the Coordinating Team is experiencing several vacancies on the Team and are unable to continue communication efforts as they stand now.

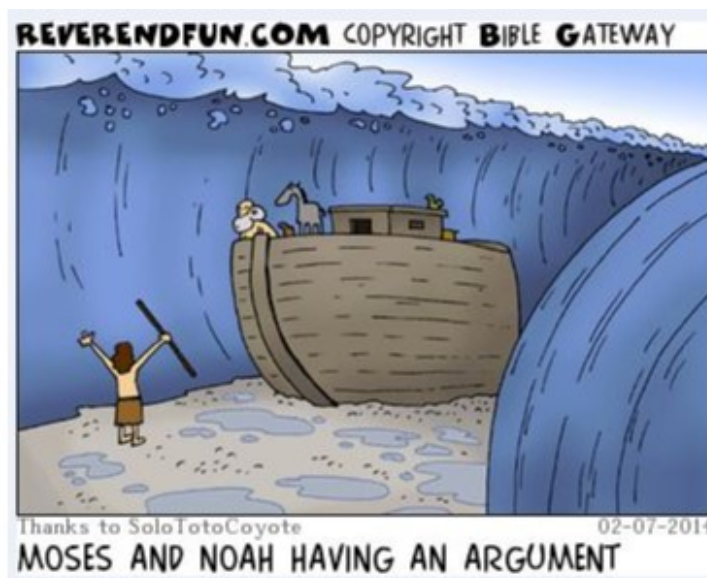
The Coordinating Team has proposed to approach this issue by combining Mission Communities from the current 7 communities to 4 mission communities, and reducing the outreach efforts to a twice per year newsletter to all church PW leaders/contacts. Communication between the Shenandoah Presbytery PW Coordinating Team and the church PW leaders/contacts will depend heavily on the individual church PW leaders/contacts communicating their needs for literature, speakers, information, events, etc. back to their mission community coordinator.

This change, if adopted, will result in the following proposed Mission Community model:

*Eastern Panhandle and Potomac Highlands* - Paula Osborne  
*Mountain Valley and Central Valley* - Donna Parker  
*Highland Augusta E1, E2, and E3* - Joyce Anderson  
*Maury River* - Karen Stevens

The Coordinating Team is open to all ideas to improve communication with the PW and encourages all PW leaders and contacts to contribute their ideas directly to the PW Coordinating Team members. While we are saddened to have to reduce our outreach in this manner, the CT remains committed to effectively providing information and services to our PW Missions Communities. Please remember to notify those individuals listed above of your current PW leadership contact information to help us keep our communications fluid.

If you have ideas, or would like to volunteer some time by serving on the Coordinating Team, please contact any member of the team. We are always here as your PW resource! Contact information can be found on the Shenandoah Presbytery website <https://shenpres.org/presbyterian-women/>.





## Union Seminary offers worship materials for congregations

Life with the coronavirus pandemic has been defined by adaptation. At Union Presbyterian Seminary, we have learned new skills and developed new ways of reaching students, teaching classes, and connecting with our friends and supporters.

As another year begins, the faculty and staff want to give back to our family of congregations and friends. We strive to find ever-new ways to support them in their work and ministry. As a creative response, we have designed a virtual "Union Sunday." This Union Sunday is an entire Sunday-worth of online resources intended for local congregations to use to supplement or fully furnish a Sabbath of worship and learning together.

Containing online resources for Sunday school of various ages and worship resources for a whole or partial service, this Union Sunday resource may be used as a complete package. It is also fully modular. If a congregation does not need a whole Sunday-worth of resources, a congregation may pick-and-choose only those elements that are most appropriate or needed in their context.

Importantly, this resource is fully digital and completely free. Intended to be used on Sunday, February 14, we have deliberately chosen a Sunday before the beginning of Lent yet in the middle of Black History Month. Connecting the resource on that Sunday provides ample opportunity for rich and challenging conversations and enlivening and reflective worship. The resource will remain available after that date and may certainly be used by a congregation as is best for them in their life of discipleship and regular worship should they not wish to use it on February 14 or want to revisit a resource later.

Over the coming weeks, we will provide additional information about the elements of the Union Sunday resource. In the interim, please consider making space in your congregation's Sunday life together to invite Union Presbyterian Seminary to share in being a part of your congregation's weekly teaching and worship.

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### Prayer for First Sunday in Lent

Holy God, by the grace of Jesus Christ you know the tests and trials we face. Walk with us through this wilderness. Come to us with ministers of healing and visit us with messengers of hope, so that we may return to you in faith, believing the good news of the gospel; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Mark 1:9-15



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# Shenandoah Presbytery

A Community of Christ for Worship, Nurture and Mission

**SHENANDOAH PRESBYTERY** is a covenant body where:

- CONGREGATIONS are empowered to be centers for mission
- PEOPLE OF GOD are equipped to be Disciples of Christ in a challenging world
- CHURCH LEADERS and members are nurtured and strengthened for service
- OPEN COMMUNICATION and information are used constructively and creatively to keep us connected

## Dates to Remember!

### February 2021

- 1 - CCVT 1:00 pm
- 2 - CPT 10:00 am
- 4 - CRE Oversight 4:00 pm
- 6 - CMO 9:30 am
- 9 - Staff Meeting 10:00 am
- 9 - MRMC 12:00 pm
- 9 - CNCD 3:30 pm
- 10 - CPM 10:00 am
- 11 - CRM 9:30 am
- 17 - Shenandoah Press Deadline
- 17 - Nominations 2:00 pm
- 18 - CER 10:00 am
- 18 - CPA 1:30 pm

### Other Dates

- 11 - Pastors' Meeting 12:00 pm
- 17, 24 - Lent Bible Study 12:00—1:00 pm  
(Wednesdays through March 17)
- 23 - Practice Session for Presbytery Meeting
- 25 - Pastors' Meeting 12:00 pm
- 27 - Stated Meeting of Presbytery 9:30 am

\* Unless otherwise noted, all meetings will be held via Zoom.

