

Special points of interest:

- Elder Training
- DPRT News
- Church Mailbox Story
- Much more...

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A Message from our General Presbyter

Dear Friends,

As people of faith in Jesus Christ, we are called upon to love our neighbors, no matter who they are. And because of Christ's teachings we are compelled to speak up and speak out when we hear derogatory remarks or witness abusive actions towards another. We are called upon to end such activity. And so, we must stand up and speak out against bullies – children or adults. We must speak out against those that belittle or blame another for no reason. It does not matter what color or culture or religion a person comes from – what matters is that we are followers of Christ and so it is imperative that we follow his teaching which is inclusive of all.

There has been a rise in anti-Asian violence in the past year – but it is something that has been a part of this country for much, much longer. I have heard from my Asian-American friends and colleagues that they are scared, hurt and tired! These are brothers and sisters in Christ, and they are experiencing discrimination and threats that no one should.

So, as we walk this Holy week – let us remember the taunts, discrimination, pain and suffering that Jesus went through and know that no one should ever have to endure that again. No one should die because of the color of their skin. We pray for all those who have died because of senseless acts of violence and for those left behind.

Remember the Good News, Jesus died so that we, all of humanity, might have eternal life. Let us do our part to make this a safer world for all.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Blessings,

Bronwen



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Associate General Presbyter—Nancy Meehan Yao

Pivoting. And Easter.

We have all, I think, learned to pivot this past year. Maybe not gracefully, smoothly, or quickly. But as congregations, and as family members (what?? School is all-virtual? Hybrid? In-person? this week?) and as individuals, we have had to pivot.

Pivoting is in basketball, it is in the doors of your house. But for us, pivoting is making change. Lawrence Peers reminds us that pivoting requires making U-turns or reorienting ourselves. It means that we are paying attention to the context in which we find ourselves right now. It means making adjustments as we go.

All of which can be exhausting. It can also be sad—because in pivoting, we will have to let go of the path we were on, and perhaps some of the things we love along the way.

This is the Easter season. We celebrate God's doing a new thing, in raising Christ to life after death. I imagine that there must have been a lot of pivoting, mental and otherwise, on Easter morning, as the women saw an empty tomb, and met Jesus, as they pivoted back to the disciples, to tell them the good news, as they had to, once again, pivot and leave Jerusalem to return to Galilee, where Jesus said he would meet them.

Pivoting is hard, and we have done so much of it this past year. But we might even understand that this is the essence of a faith-filled life: to pivot and follow where God is leading. Christ is Risen, He is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

Nancy



Ruling Elder Training Successful!

Ruling Elder Training was held on **Saturday, March 27**, 10-noon, via Zoom video. We had over 70 people registered from 31 churches! Many will be sharing the information with their sessions and churches.

This training was led by Rev. Bronwen Boswell, Stated Clerk and General Presbyter, and Rev. Nancy Meehan Yao, Associate General Presbyter.

If you, or your church, have an idea of something you would like for us to explore for a future workshop, please let us know at shenpres@shenpres.org.



Continuing Health Guidelines

As I write this, many of us will have had our first or second vaccine. And there is great eagerness to get back to “normal” in our lives, and in our worship. The CDC has issued guidelines about what life will be like “after vaccinations.”



From the CDC:

- ◇ People are considered fully vaccinated:
 - ◆ 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
 - ◆ 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine
- ◇ If it has been less than 2 weeks since your shot, or if you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected.
- ◇ Keep taking all prevention steps until you are fully vaccinated.

Churches should follow state and local guidelines, and be up to date on local conditions.

- ◇ Going forward, we will continue to:
- ◇ Wear masks in worship.
- ◇ Social Distance in worship- this will limit the number of people who may worship together. A second space for overflow, with video, or a second service, may be indicated. (note: guidance from the CDC about school children sitting 3’ apart in classroom settings does NOT apply to adults in worship)
- ◇ Continue with on-line worship, as well as in-person, to limit the number and protect congregation members.
- ◇ Clean and disinfect between church services.
- ◇ Have increased ventilation of fresh air (not heater or ac- those should bring the worship space up to temperature, and then be shut off prior to people coming in, since re-circulated air, even with filters, can spread the virus.) Windows and doors should be opened to let fresh air circulate.
- ◇ Sessions and their pastors should set benchmarks based on local numbers of infections to determine at what point in-person should be suspended.

The church is not “closed.” The church has not been closed, this past year. What we have done is find new ways to worship, ways that allow us to care for one another, and others in the community, by taking precautions regarding health and safety.

For the Commonwealth of Virginia guidelines, see:

[https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-THIRD-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Easing-of-Commonsense-Surge-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-72-THIRD-AMENDED-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Easing-of-Commonsense-Surge-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

For West Virginia, see:

<https://governor.wv.gov/Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO%2077-20%20Face%20Covering%20Amendment.pdf>

We are excited to have E-giving now available to all churches of Shenandoah Presbytery - for *acceptances only* at this time. You may pay with your bank account or by credit card. Please be aware there is a fee. (If you pay by bank account, the fee is much less.)

Go to: <https://shenpres.org/> and find the “Online Giving” button at the top right of the red bar. This button will take you to the payment web page where you enter your payment information.

Please contact Heather at bookkeeper@shenpres.org, or 540-433-2556, if you have any questions.



OR: Point your phone camera at the QR code above and it will take you to the payment web page!

Report on iCARE & Ethiopia

March 21, 2021

One of Presbytery's missions is the iCARE Committee which was formed in 1999. The name is an acronym meaning Illubabor Children's Agape Response. Through this committee, individuals and churches currently support 53 children at the Gore Home for Children in Gore, Ethiopia. The Home is an orphanage managed by the churches in the surrounding area. The Home is run by Kes Ayana Heddu, a pastor whose job this is.

Gore is a small town in the Western part of Ethiopia. Ethiopia has been having civil unrest, but that has been in the Tigray region to the North in the country. Also an issue has been the unrest in South Sudan that is not so far away to the NW of Gore. The unrest in South Sudan has pushed nearly 500,000 refugees into Ethiopia, thereby pushing prices for food up. With the crisis economy created by both these conflicts, inflation in 2019 was 15.8% over the previous year, inflation in 2020 was 20.16% over 2019. Kes Ayana tells me that food now costs more than twice what it did before.

Covid-19 is also hitting Ethiopia. However, here the physical isolation is helping. In Gore and Mettu (a larger nearby town) 90 folks were found positive, but no deaths yet.

Students at the Gore Home get meals and clothes. They are close enough to walk to the town school. They get tutoring help if they need it and a spiritual upbringing. There's supervision and a dorm mother. Someone cares about them. In 10th grade, students take a national exam (in English), and if they score high enough (top 5%) the National

Government will pay their University fees. An amazing number of Gore graduates have been able to make use of this program. One can literally come to the Gore Home after living on the streets, apply yourself for a number of years and come out with a college degree (which effectively guarantees you a job). That's an amazing success!!

If you would like to help with this mission, please contact one of the names below. It would make such a big difference in the lives of these children.

Lou



Here's a recent photo of some of the children, taken at the Gore Home.

Lou Dolive, Covenant
iCARE Chair
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540-448-4490 cell

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(540) 337-6547

Cliff Gilcrest, Covenant
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(540) 290-1089

Millie Hiner, Smyrna
nrhmmh@comcast.net
540-430-1902

Bill Burslem, Opequon
wburslem331@comcast.net
540-667-0172

Disaster & Preparedness Response Information Now at Your Fingertips

An extensive revision of disaster information on the Presbytery's website has been completed by the Disaster Preparedness & Response Team (DPRT). This project was made possible with the expert help of our Communications Administrator and Webmaster, Donna Lanaghan.

You can find this resource on the Presbytery website under the Mission menu or directly at the link: <https://shenpres.org/disaster-preparedness/>.

There are now three buttons to take you to various resources.

- Disaster Plan & Teams: Direct link to our current Disaster Plan, a roster of the DPRT members, and information about forming work teams.
- Gift of the Heart Kits: Talks about our program for these vital kits and takes you to the Church World Service website that has all the latest details.
- Preparedness Resources: Describes primary resources for:
 - Families
 - Congregations
 - Sample church disaster plans
 - Church safety resources
 - Preparedness Training



Please contact anyone on the DPRT if you have any questions or would like more information.



On Saturday, March 20th, Rev. Horace Douty, pastor of Oxford Presbyterian Church, officiated at the wedding of his granddaughter, Loren Douty, to Brian Cole. The marriage took place at Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church where Horace Douty grew up and Loren's numerous ancestors (the Lyles) helped build the church in 1756. There were approximately 20 in attendance—all wearing facemasks except for the immediate family.

Photo by Donna Lanaghan

A One Great Hour of Sharing Needs Your Help

As active members of the Shenandoah Presbytery Disaster Preparedness and Response Team, and members of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance National Response Team, we would like to take a moment to speak on behalf of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (OGHS). The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering is one of the four church-wide offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It is most commonly received during the weeks leading up to Easter. The Offering provides support for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP), and the Self-Development of People Program (SDOP).



It is likely no surprise to anyone that the OGHS Offering was down by 50% in 2020. What that means is that these three programs – PDA, PHP and SDOP – had their budgets cut by 50%. In a time of great need for our neighbors, these programs had seriously diminished resources to provide assistance. PDA was in a slightly better position than PHP and SDOP because PDA's ministry is more visible. We see the need for disaster response on our TV's regularly with news reports of storms, fires, and flooding. So, PDA's voluntary designated donations continued. PDA also used \$3.5M from reserve funds to provide COVID grants to churches serving marginalized communities.

All three of these programs work regularly to meet the goals of being a Matthew 25 denomination. One Great Hour of Sharing is the largest way that Presbyterians come together in mission and ministry to be "repairers of the breach" (Isaiah 58). The work focuses on material need and their root causes — from direct famine and disaster relief to the implications of systemic racism and poverty. As you prayerfully discern your participation in the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, please consider that we are called to be repairers of the breach and to serve as Jesus said – the least of these our brothers and sisters. And to that discernment we leave you with this prayer:

*Savior, do not meet us where we are, but find us where you are instead:
with those experiencing injustice, hunger, thirst and great need. Amen.*

Dave and Carolyn Thalman.

One Great Hour of Sharing

The PCUSA tells us that One Great Hour of Sharing is the largest way for Presbyterians to come together in mission. One Great Hour of Sharing is one of four Special Offerings connected to a season of the church year and mandated by the General Assembly to help the whole Church join together in response to God's grace. See the fliers at specialofferings.pcusa.org.

Resources are available for this Special Offering starting in January and are available by going to presbyterianmission.org/oghs

Congregations collect contributions for this Special Offering during the Lenten season.

Congregations then send these funds to the presbytery and in turn 100% of the One Great Hour of Sharing contributions from all the Shenandoah Presbytery churches is sent to the denomination.

The PCUSA uses your generous offering to support the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Self- Development of People.

- PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (PDA) : Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters, and support for refugees : Receives 32% of funds raised
- PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM (PHP) : Takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed : Receives 36% of funds raised
- SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE (SDOP) : Invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these issues : Receives 32% of funds raised
- For more information go to <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/>

4-Cents-a-Meal Offering

Submitted by Heather Carter, Funds Administrator, Shenandoah Presbytery

*Thank You to everyone who contributed to the February Presbytery meeting offering!
This collection is going to support the 4 cents a meal program.*

When churches and individuals contribute to the 4 cents a meal program you are directly helping to stop hunger. You are not just supplying food but helping to support programs that have goals to tackle issues before people need to go to the food pantries.

When individuals give funds to their churches, the helping starts immediately because churches keep 25% of the collection for immediate local use. The remaining 75% is sent to the presbytery and our Committee on Mission and Outreach prayerfully divides the funds to international, national, and local programs. Some of the programs that are currently supported are listed below:

Living Waters for the World-Int'l.
Living Waters for the World-ShenPres
Presbyterian Hunger Program
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Illubabor Bethel Synod-Ethiopia
Church World Services
Heifer, Inc.
Blue Ridge Food Bank
Lord Fairfax Food Bank
Hunters for the Hungry
Society of St. Andrew
C-CAP Front Royal
Highland Food Pantry

Sherando Food Pantry
C-CAP Winchester
Jefferson Co. Community Ministry
Martinsburg Rescue Mission
Loaves and Fishes, Martinsburg
Starting Points Family Resource Center
Christian Assistance Network
Hampshire County Food Pantry
Moorefield Pres. Church Pantry
Mt. Storm Food Pantry
Kingsway Help Center
Rockbridge Area Relief Agency
Community Table of Rockbridge

People Helping People
Massanutten Pres. Church Pantry
West Rockingham Food Pantry
Valley Missions, Inc.
Craigsville Community Food Pantry
Churchville Community Food Pantry
Glen Kirk Church Pantry
Word of Faith Food Pantry
Verona Community Food Pantry
WV Council of Churches
VA. Interfaith Ctr. for Public Policy
Bread for the World

4 cents a meal is collected all year round.

To help support this mission you can donate funds to your church and put "4 cents a meal" in the memo line.

Thank you for your support to help end hunger.

from Presbyterian Hunger Program

Dear Shenandoah Presbytery, members, and congregations,

A year ago, we couldn't have imagined a global pandemic that would disrupt all of life and increase hunger, homelessness, and unemployment. Staff at the Presbyterian Hunger Program have been working hard to respond to COVID-19 and its impacts on hunger as well as adjusting to remote work, learning technologies, and new processes to help us stay relevant, effective, and faithful in this work.

We are so grateful for your support in this ongoing difficult time. Because of the increase of hunger-related impacts of COVID-19, your generosity is crucial to our ability to respond.

Because of you, churches and organizations are able to distribute more food to people who are hungry and also to do education and advocacy to help ensure future food security for vulnerable communities. Because of you, global partners living in places of war, violence, poverty, famine, drought or flooding have better access to safety, health, and basic needs.

We believe that God is with us, that Christ surrounds us, and that the Spirit guides us, particularly as we navigate the most challenging times. We then

feel called to ourselves be present with communities who are suffering. We try by our actions, partnerships, and ministry to be God's love in places of pain. Your contribution to PHP also demonstrates presence, solidarity, and hope—to us who work at the national church and to communities themselves who are struggling. Thank you.

In gratitude,

Rebecca Barnes

Rebecca Barnes
Coordinator, Presbyterian Hunger Program
www.pcusa.org/hunger



Photo thanks to PHP grant partner Amrita Bhoomi, India



Vandalism & Mail Stolen from Church Mailboxes

*Submitted by Linda Fields, Inactive Elder & Treasurer
Second Presbyterian, Waynesboro*

An article entitled "The Growing Problem of Mail Theft at Churches" was in a recent issue of Church Law and Tax Report.

After reading this article, I realized this is a concern for many churches, not just our church. I would like to share with you our church's recent experiences with stolen checks payable to the church.

To our knowledge, mail was stolen from our mailbox twice between August 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020. We are not aware of other dates this may have occurred prior to August 1.

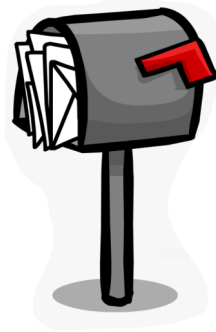
August 2020 - The first instance involved two checks payable to the church, endorsed by individuals and deposited through an ATM machine at a local credit union. Since the checks were payable to the church, they were flagged by the Fraud Department of the credit union. This department contacted our church to verify we had not received the checks and given them to an individual. One of the checks was typed, the other hand-written, neither was from a church member. The amount on the hand-written check had been altered for a much larger amount than originally written. Our church immediately contacted those who wrote these checks, our church members, the local police department and the post office. We also secured on our mailbox post a locking security mailbox.

December 2020 - The morning of December 29, 2020 one of our members noticed the security mailbox had been removed from the post sometime between the afternoon (after our

secretary left for the day) of December 28 and the morning of December 29. The local police department was contacted and upon searching the area surrounding the church, found the mailbox behind some shrubbery. Our member shook the mailbox to see if any mail would fall out, it did not. Our church secretary unlocked the mailbox, and it was empty. The assumption was that no mail was in the box when it was removed from the post. The church rented a P. O. Box and did not secure the mailbox back on the post. A few days later the member who secured the mailbox to the post in August, turned the mailbox in different positions, He discovered when

the mailbox was not secured to a post or building, it could be turned in a certain position allowing the mail to drop into area where it could be removed while the box was still locked. A few weeks after this, we were contact by a lady (non-member) who discovered a check she wrote and mailed to the church as a memorial gift, cleared her bank account for a much larger amount than written. She contacted her bank and the church. Her check had been "washed".

Everything she had written on the check, including her signature, had been removed and new information written on the check. This check was endorsed by the "new" payee and another individual and processed through an ATM machine at the same credit union as the first stolen checks. Since the church's name had been removed from the check, there is no proof the check was payable to the church and stolen from our mailbox, we cannot pursue filing charges against the individuals. We are currently working with the lady whose check was stolen, her bank, the credit union, and the local police department to resolve this issue. In our case a locking, security mailbox did not prevent someone from



Here are suggestions from the article of ways to protect your mail & contributions from your members (donors):

- Invest in security cameras
- Re-locate mailbox (if permissible by the local Post Office)
- Rent a P. O. Box
- Encourage members (donors) to review their bank statements upon receipt
- Send periodic statements to your members (donors) for their review and reconciliation of checks payable to the church.
- Encourage members (donors) to review their statements from the church upon receipt to ensure the church did receive their gift. Although, the check may have cleared their bank account, this does not guarantee the church received and deposited the check.
- If the church office is not open daily, arrange for someone to check the mail daily after the normal delivery time.
- Have a secured area in which the person picking up the daily church mail can leave mail for authorized individuals.
- Have a plan for delivery of packages not delivered by the Post Office.
- Have your member (donor) contact their bank immediately upon discovering a possible fraudulent check on their bank statement
- Have coverage for stolen checks, monies included on your church insurance policy.
- If possible, encourage online giving.

Spring Work Day at Massanetta Springs

Spring is in the air and Massanetta needs some TLC. On April 24th, Massanetta will be having a Spring Work Day with lodging and meals options provided. Will you answer the call and lend a hand? Sign up today!

Tentative Schedule

You may come for one night, both nights, or simply join us for the Service Day on Saturday.

Friday April 23rd

4:00 p.m. - Check In & Sabbath Time (Feel free to arrive anytime on Friday evening) -
Dinner on your own.

Saturday April 24th

Breakfast on your own

9:00 a.m. - Service Day Begins

12:00 p.m. - Lunch provided by Massanetta Springs

1:00 p.m. - Service Day Continues

4:00 p.m. - Service Day Ends / Sabbath Continues

5:00 p.m. - Guided Labyrinth Walk (optional)

Dinner On Your Own

7:30 p.m. - Campfire & S'mores!

Sunday April 25th

8:00 a.m. - Light breakfast provided by Massanetta Springs

9:00 a.m. - Morning Worship and Sabbath continues, check out as you're ready.

Costs and Details

Massanetta is providing lunch on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday for anyone who wants it. There is no charge for the meals, or to come for the service day.

We are providing lodging on a donation basis for the weekend. We suggest a donation of \$79/room/night, but no donation is required. Advance reservations for lodging are required to be sure we can meet social distancing expectations.

Space in Hubler Lodge and Richardson will be available.

For meals not provided by Massanetta: If you're staying for the weekend, there are a variety of great restaurants in our area that are doing carry out, delivery, and even outdoor dining. If you let us know, we'll be happy to tell you some of our favorites.



Types of Service Work

Weeding/Gardening

Brush Clearing

Weed Eating

Power Washing

Painting/Staining

Indoor Projects in case of bad weather

For more information, please call (540)434-3829 or email Rachael at rachaelb@massanettasprings.org



Sign Up Here!



PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSICIANS
2021 WORSHIP & MUSIC CONFERENCES AT MONTREAT

— JUNE 20-25 & JUNE 27-JULY 2 —

<https://www.presbymusic.org/2021conference>



Summer Staff Opportunities



Join our team for the summer in one of these areas!



- Netta Day Camp Counselor
- Hospitality Intern
- Recreation staff
- Dining staff

Visit www.massanettasprings.org for more information

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04-30-2012

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 HAS SEATING ON THE WINDOW SIDE ...
 IT'S THE BEST THAT I CAN DO WITHOUT
 A RESERVATION**

**PRESBYTERY OF
SHENANDOAH**

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ShenPres.org



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

Mark Your Calendar!

April 2021

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 - CRE Oversight 4:00 pm | 21 - Shenandoah Press Deadline |
| 5 - Office Closed—Easter Monday | 21 - Nominations 2:00 pm |
| 13 - CPT 10:00 am | 22 - CER 10:00 am |
| 13 - MRMC 12:00 pm | 22 - Pastors' Meeting 12:00 pm |
| 13 - Strong Ministers' Committee 3 pm | 27 - CPC 10:00 am |
| 13 - CNCD 3:30 pm | |
| 14 - CPM 10:00 am | |
| 15 - CRM 9:30 am | |
| 15 - CPA 1:30 pm | |
| 17 - CMO 9:30 am | |
| 20 - Staff Meeting 10:00 am | |

Upcoming Meeting

May 25 - Stated Meeting of Presbytery 9:30 am

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