

# Shenandoah Press

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## A Message from our General Presbyter

The seasons are changing – or so we think! The trees may be blooming, and the flowers may be making their way up through the soil – but I'm still wearing my winter coat and the wind is blowing and I'm wearing a sweater and drinking hot tea! Yes, that is making me a bit cranky as I am ready for warmer weather and no snow! The snow squalls of this past weekend didn't help.

And yet, the snow didn't stay around, the sun is shining, and well, the flowers are coming up. And I am fortunate to have a sweater to wear and a place to stay away from the wind. And I know better than to get into a habit of complaining - but I'm finding that difficult as we continue to navigate the world in which we live in. Maybe you are too?



So, I need to pull out the mug from the shelf that says, "Gratitude changes everything" and not only drink my tea from it, but read those words repeatedly and then live them out. Because when we remember to give thanks for all that God provides, we cannot help but have an attitude change. We remember the blessings that come each and every day - in the warmth of a sweater, a chuckle with a friend, a way to provide for our families, a hug, a smile, knowing that a gracious God loves us. And when we live into a life of gratitude, that attitude spreads as we share that smile, provide that hug, that chuckle, the gift of love to another. And then watch it grow.

Remember those who need our help, our hands, our prayers, near and far. Give thanks to God in all things as we continue our journey in Lent so that with great joy, we may greet our risen Lord at Easter.

Thanks be to God, and welcome spring,

*Bronwen*

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## Make Note of Our New Mailing Address



The Shenandoah Presbytery office has a new mailing address. Please make note of our new address:

**Shenandoah Presbytery  
P. O. Box 1146  
Harrisonburg, VA 22803**

We are no longer accepting mail at our office. Please update your documentation and directories with our new address.

Thank you for your cooperation!

## Presbytery Staff

- Bronwen Boswell,  
General Presbyter & Stated Clerk  
Email – presbytersc@shenpres.org
- Nancy Meehan Yao,  
Associate General Presbyter  
Email – assocgp@shenpres.org
- Kim Stroupe, Admin. Assistant  
Email – kims@shenpres.org
- Heather Carter, Funds Admin.  
Email – bookkeeper@shenpres.org
- Donna Lanaghan, Communications  
Email – shenpres@shenpres.org
- Larry Holsinger, Treasurer

## Associate General Presbyter—Nancy Meehan Yao

### The 8 Habits of Evangelism Habit #3 Sacraments



As Presbyterians, we celebrate 2 Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We sometimes say "remember your Baptism," as a way to remind us that God claims us and loves us...and for many (most) of us, we cannot remember our baptism, since we were baptized as infants. But even that is grace, as it shows that long before we can turn to God, or voice our faith, God has turned to us. Grace always precedes gratitude.

The other Sacrament is the Lord's Supper- again, God's grace comes to us, for in Christ we are invited to the Table, and by the Spirit, at that Table we are lifted up to the very presence of Christ.

But how are these part of formation for Evangelism?

Our own Book of Order reminds us that Sacraments are "...ordinary things—the basic elements of water, bread, wine— [which] proclaim the extraordinary love of God." (W- 3.0401)

God's grace is given and shared through ordinary things. Perhaps our ordinary lives, as well, can be part of sharing God's love. Part of this will be "living sacramentally," that is, not as holy/more righteous than others, but in intentionally seeking out the grace of God in everyday life.

We do this by:

**Resting.** By practicing Sabbath, taking time to be with God, to let God be God, and not feeling that we have to run the universe, because we don't. And can't. Many of us do have heavy responsibilities, long lists of tasks, and very full lives. Find some time to set those aside, and rest in God's grace.

**Reflecting.** Taking time for Sabbath will give you time to reflect: where do you see God in action? What do you wonder about?

**Rediscovering.** When we practice rest and reflection, we can rediscover God's vision for our own lives, and for our congregational life. (Aisha Brooks-Johnson)

**Resistance.** All of the above give us the habits and abilities to resist: to resist all that is not of God in our lives, congregations and communities. This might mean not only the big stuff, but also resisting just going through the motions of daily life. Resisting will instead turn us back into the cycle of Rest, reflection and rediscovery.

#### Questions for Discussion:

- ◇ In what ways can you and your church be more prepared and present before, during and after a sacrament-filled worship service?
- ◇ How would you explain the ordinary turned extraordinary nature of the sacrament?
- ◇ Consider your life. How can you incorporate the practices mentioned above? How will you start?
- ◇ How will this help you share the Good News given to us in Jesus Christ?

Blessings, Nancy

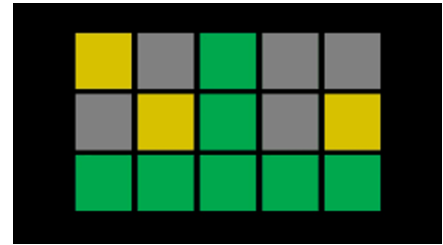
(content, adapted, based on Aisha Brooks-Johnson)



**Remember, you can pay  
your acceptances and mission payments  
online with this QR Code!  
Try it!**

## WORDLE as a lesson for church...and life.

I don't know if you have seen, or play, the game WORDLE. An online game, you are presented with a 5x6 grid. You are tasked with guessing the 5 letter word, and you get 6 chances to do so. It appears once per day—a discrete task.



WORDLE is a game that has a lot to teach the church, I have found. And it does that by asking us to learn from our failures. Because the game indicates which letters you get correctly, which letters are not in that day's word, and which letters are in the correct spot in the daily word, you are given a lot of feedback. Even in, or maybe especially in, our failures.

As people, and as church, we don't like failure, do we? "Failure is not an option" is famously attributed to Gene Krantz, during the Apollo 13 space flight. (note: Krantz did not say that. Yet the phrase became so famous for it, from its inclusion in the movie, that he used it as the title for his autobiography.) Failure is always an option. But we can learn from failure—and in fact, failure is NOT failure if we do that.

WORDLE is designed to give valuable information for your next turn. What if, instead of fear of failure, or shaming those who attempt something new in church, we use the results to give us more information? What is that information gathering is actually a spiritual exercise, one in which we reflect on what has happened, where and in what ways God showed up, and how we can go forward, with God?

You get 6 tries to get the WORDLE of the day correct. A new one appears every day. "New every morning" are God's graces to us. Don't be afraid, and go forward, try new things, even if they result in failure. You just might learn something!



### Zetta Presbyterian Church honors Stan and Candace Farthing

Stan Farthing accepted the call to be our Pastor in March of 2004, and as a surprise we also gained a wonderful piano player in his wife Candace. Our congregation has been blessed to have them for 18 years.

After services on March 20, Zetta surprised Stan and Candace with a reception in honor of both of their service to our congregation. Stan and Candace are more than our Pastor and our piano player, they are a part of each or our families.

Thank you for your 18 yrs. of service, looking forward to the next 18 years!

## Four Reasons for Hope

*submitted by Nancy Meehan Yao*

Rev. Cameron Tribble, CEO of Convergence church consulting, writes:

“In these disorienting times, it’s hard to hold onto hope. Seeing a future that promotes peace, equity, sustainability and compassion seem like more of a stretch than it should be. But perhaps this disorienting “dark night” is readying us for the journey ahead. Maybe we are entering... our time of reevaluating how authentically we are living into Jesus’ teaching of the Kin-dom of God made possible through us.”

She gives 4 reasons for hope:

1. We have learned a lot about what it means to be the Church. These past 2 years have been showing us what is necessary...and what is not. We have seen how we can be church, even while we let go of some things.
2. Creativity is on the rise. Think about all the things you have learned to do, all the creative ways you have been, these past 2 years. Pivoting, being flexible, finding creative ways to connect with each other, to worship together in spirit (if not bodily together), and to reach out to the world to share the Good News of Christ—we have learned a lot.
3. We are curious about the future: “As a byproduct of our disorientation and rise of creativity,” Tribble writes, “we are curious about our future rather than paralyzed by fear and inaction. Being curious means that we are open to learning, eager to connect with each other, generous in sharing our stories and observations, and ready to organize for local action.” We can be curious, rather than frightened or paralyzed, because we know we have already come through some hard stuff.
4. We can’t go back. The new normal, whatever that is, will not be the past. If we are a faith that is founded on death, and then resurrection, letting go of the parts of our past and traditions that get in the way of following Christ is part of going into the future.

We have every reason for hope, for we worship the Risen Lord.

For the full article, see <https://convergenceus.org/2022/03/17/four-reasons-for-hope>

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## Thank You for the Moffett Grant!

Dear Committee:

Hello! I am one of the leaders of the Opequon Presbyterian Church Roots & Shoots Garden. I am sending this on behalf of the Roots & Shoots Garden. We received a Moffett Grant of \$1365.00 for 2021.

The Moffett Grant was an integral part in the success of our first year of this garden. We used the funds to offset the cost of the lumber for the 40 raised beds which were built. This was especially helpful as the cost of lumber tripled during the pandemic. Of those 40 beds, 34 were used for produce, along with companion plantings of herbs and flowers. The remaining six beds have a mix of flowers and herbs specifically planted to repel deer, groundhogs, and rabbits from dining in our garden.

I want to thank you for helping us to take this idea of a garden, on the OPC grounds, and make it a reality. We donated over 1800 pounds of produce in 2021 to two food pantries in our local area. It was a wonderful first year in our new location!

*Opequon Church member*

## Shenandoah Presbytery Local Missions Update

“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”

1 Chronicles 29:14

God is SO GOOD! Through God's blessings we have been able to bless others in so many new and exciting ways! Recently, the Committee on Mission and Outreach (CMO) asked the churches of the Shenandoah Presbytery to report on their local mission efforts. And the responses were so encouraging! What we discovered is that, despite the pandemic and other hardships, local missions have continued, and even increased! Because of distancing, isolation, job loss, remote learning, etc., we have been forced to think beyond the food pantry and explore new ways to serve the needs of our local communities. Just take a look at some of the creative ways some of your brothers and sisters are serving others in the name of Jesus Christ:

**Bethesda Church** in Rockbridge Bath partnered with the Brownsburg Ruritan Club to cut and haul 13 dump trucks full of firewood to local folks in need.

**Petersburg Presbyterian Church** filled backpacks with handy items (toiletries, rain ponchos, snacks, etc.) and distributed them to the homeless in partnership with the Eastern Action Agency. In addition they added The Purse Project, gathering new and gently used purses and filling them with items women might need when they come to the Women's Crisis Center with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

**Olivet Presbyterian Church** has a diaper ministry collecting and distributing diapers to new mothers in need. They also partner with the local elementary school to provide needed school supplies and assistance to local children in need.

**Hedgesville Presbyterian Church** installed an outdoor Blessing Box which is stocked with shelf stable foods available to the public 24/7. This has become a community ministry as neighbors now keep the box filled.

**Bridgewater Presbyterian Church** fills backpacks with ready-to-eat food for the weekend for children at a local elementary school.

**First Staunton Presbyterian** granted scholarships to local students for higher education

**Collierstown Presbyterian** used grant money from the Presbytery to open learning pods for students needing assistance with virtual learning after the local school buildings closed due to COVID. They also hosted Camp Daniel, a four-week summer day-camp in June 2021. Twenty-five Pre-K through 7th grade students participated. Plans are now being made for a summer camp -- Camp JOY-- to be held in June 2022.

Praise God for your creativity and efforts! May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and inspire us to serve the needs of our neighbors with love and creativity. May we also remember our neighboring churches (of all denominations) in our prayers as we all strive to navigate our ever-changing world. The following prayer was written in response to the prayer requests we received from the responding churches. Perhaps you can use this prayer (in some form) during worship or at your next session meeting.

### PRAYER FOR LOCAL MISSIONS

Gracious and Loving God, we know that everything comes from you, and all that we have and give comes from your hand. We give you thanks for our many blessings and our ability to share those blessings with others. We pray for the churches of our Presbytery, and churches everywhere, as they try to serve the needs of their local communities. Open our eyes and ears that we might recognized the needs of others in our midst, especially those who often go unnoticed. Open our hearts to respond to the needs of our communities – physically and spiritually—in Love. Help everyone who serves in your name to fulfil the mission of the Church, especially while navigating the ever-changing world we live in. Send your Holy Spirit to guide us to use our resources wisely and creatively, and to seek new partners in our neighborhood businesses and organizations. May ALL our efforts give Glory and Honor to you, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Respectfully,  
Vanessa Smith  
CMO, Local Missions Committee

## Refugee Resettlement Update from the Committee on Mission & Outreach

It's been a busy couple of months for an ecumenical team of community members who have participated generously in supporting Church World Service in Winchester as we have helped to welcome 76 Afghans and set up 22 new homes. The team includes members from many churches and community organizations. It has been a great joy to see the community work together to prepare welcome for our new neighbors.

Despite the 22 new homes we have completed, the donation center remains full, and donations of furniture continue to come in and go out. We also welcome cash donations. We have some items that must be new (microwaves, cribs and car seats) and we sometimes need to purchase items to complete the house set up. We also purchase food for the families.

First Presbyterian Church in Winchester has been managing the cash donations. Checks can be sent to the church office with refugee in the memo line.

First Presbyterian Church  
116 S Loudoun St.  
Winchester, VA 22601

We are grateful for the support of the community and for the being a Matthew 25 church that follows Jesus's call to love our neighbors.

Questions: Contact Carolyn Thalman ([cjthalman@comcast.net](mailto:cjthalman@comcast.net))



**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

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**Support our Ukrainian siblings**

Europe is facing its largest humanitarian crisis since World War II. The United Nations estimates up to 18 million people, both internally displaced and refugees, will eventually be impacted.

According to reports from Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance, Ukrainians are facing reduced or disrupted services in water, heating, electricity, transportation and telecommunications. Health services have deteriorated rapidly due to shortages of medical supplies and personnel.

Refugees, mostly women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly, had to leave their homes and spend days traveling to neighboring countries for safety, with almost nothing with them.

Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing allow for an immediate response from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) when emergencies first occur, often responding to crises that never make it into the news.

In this volatile situation, PDA was able to provide urgent funding to trusted, established partners with the expertise to carry out humanitarian aid. Reformed and Orthodox church partners, like the Community of St. Egidio and Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, are working closely with local churches and organizations to provide food, water, clothing, shelter, psychosocial support and other basic items for survival. They are the "boots on the ground," listening and responding to the needs of those impacted.

To stay informed about the work Presbyterians are doing in and around Ukraine, visit [pcusa.org/pda/ukraine](http://pcusa.org/pda/ukraine). To learn more about One Great Hour of Sharing and the vital ministries it supports, visit [pcusa.org/oghs](http://pcusa.org/oghs).

In this season of Lent, pray for our siblings in Ukraine. Pray for peace. And pray that all of us will remember that we are the Church, **together**.

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**WAYS TO GIVE —**

Through your congregation • Online at [pcusa.org/give-oghs](http://pcusa.org/give-oghs)  
• Text OGH5 to 91999

Presbyterian Women of Shenandoah Presbytery

*Presents*

### The Annual Spring Gathering

Saturday, April 9, 2022



“Go Out With Joy and Be Led Forth With Peace”

Isaiah 55:12: “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”

Massanetta Springs Conference Center

Stewart Hall

Harrisonburg, VA

For more information, or to register for the Spring Gathering, go to the webpage: <https://shenpres.org/presbyterian-women/>.

Registration must be received by April 1, 2022.

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... THEY'RE SERVING FOOD

**PRESBYTERY OF  
SHENANDOAH**

P. O. Box 1146  
Harrisonburg, VA 22803

Phone: 540-433-2556  
E-mail: shenpres@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

## Dates to Remember!

### April 2022

- 5 - CNCD 3:30 pm
- 7 - CRM 9:30 am
- 12 - Staff Meeting 10:00 am
- 13 - CPM 10:00 am
- 20 - Nominations 10:00 am
- 21 - Shenandoah Press Deadline
- 26 - CPC 10:00 am
- 28 - Community Cup NWC 9:30 am
- 28 - CER 10:00 am

### Other Dates

- 9 - PW Spring Gathering 8:30 am  
at Massanetta Springs
- 18 - Office Closed for Easter
- 26 - PW Bible Study 7:00 pm
- 28 - Pastors' Meeting 12:00 pm

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