

# Presbytery of Scioto Valley (PSV) Mid-Week E-News August 6, 2020

[www.psvonline.org](http://www.psvonline.org)

## *The Presbytery* OF SCIOTO VALLEY

Mission and Vision Statement

***"Inspire, Strengthen, And Challenge Congregations For Christ's Mission"***

Presbytery Calendar  
Staff Information  
Prayer Concerns

### **AUGUST**

#### **Thursday, August 6**

1 pm

PSV Nominating  
Committee Zoom  
Meeting

#### **Monday, August 10**

3 pm

PSV Commission for  
Presbytery Operations  
(CPO)  
Zoom Meeting

#### **Tuesday, August 18**

4 pm

Presbytery Special  
Meeting on Zoom  
Two Business Items:  
-Elect Elder Jim Wilson  
as the PSV Temporary  
Stated Clerk through  
12-31-2020

### **Presbytery of Scioto Valley Special Meeting Via Zoom, Tuesday, August 18, 4 pm**

A Special meeting of the Presbytery will be held on Tuesday, August 18 at 4 pm via videoconferencing. Mark Gauen, Moderator of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley, in accordance with our Presbytery Bylaws, has called a Special Meeting of the Presbytery for the purpose of electing a Temporary Clerk and a Temporary Treasurer for the Presbytery.

The Commission for Presbytery Operations (CPO) has requested this special Presbytery meeting due to business that needs to be conducted before our scheduled Presbytery meeting in September and the Coordinating Team has concurred. This business requires two signatures from elected officers. Hence the need for the special election.

An email copy of this announcement is also being sent out. If you do not get the email, please call the Presbytery Office, or email: [Jeannie@psvonline.org](mailto:Jeannie@psvonline.org) and provide an email address. Next week another email will be sent with instructions on how to enter the meeting and information about the election of the Presbytery Temporary Stated Clerk and Temporary Treasurer.

-Elect Elder Bob Gustafson as the PSV Temporary Treasurer through 12-31-2020

PSV Coordinating Team  
(CT) Zoom Meeting

**Tuesday, August 25**  
1 pm

PSV Commission for Nurture and Outreach (CNO) Zoom Meeting

**Monday, August 31**  
12:30

PSV Commission for Church Professionals (CCP) Zoom Meeting  
3 pm

PSV Commission for Congregational Life (CCL) Zoom Meeting

**PRESBYTERY STAFF**

Rev. Dr. Jeannie Harsh  
Executive Presbyter  
[jeannie@psvonline.org](mailto:jeannie@psvonline.org)

Dagmar Romage  
Administrative Assistant  
[dagmar@psvonline.org](mailto:dagmar@psvonline.org)

John Wyckoff  
Financial Assistant  
[accounting@psvonline.org](mailto:accounting@psvonline.org)

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The Presbytery Office remains closed,  
but Presbytery Staff continue to be available by email and phone.

**Celebrating the July Ordination Anniversaries of The Presbytery of Scioto Valley Pastors...**

One of the ministries of the Presbytery Commission for Church Professionals is to support the minister members in our Presbytery. We thank and honor our Pastors with anniversaries in the month of July and thank them for faithfully serving with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love...



The Reverend Rev Catherine M. Bogue 8-2-1998  
The Reverend Rev Joan Bolinger 8-8-2009  
The Reverend Karen J. Chakoian 8-19-1984  
The Reverend Gordon E. Johnson 8-10-1958  
The Reverend Leland Platt 8-11-2002  
The Reverend Arthur A. Reed 8-20-1989  
The Reverend Rebecca J. Tollefson 8-29-1981

**Reverend Mark Gauen, PSV Moderator**

***Reflections on Serving as a Commissioner to the 224th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)***

"From Lament to Hope". This was the theme of the 224th General Assembly(GA) of the Presbyterian Church(USA), which was held last month. I was privileged to be one of the commissioners to this General Assembly and I discovered that this was indeed the assembly for lament and for hope.



Mark Gauen

This GA was one of lament for what might have been. It was not held in Baltimore but held electronically. Because of this we could not really meet our fellow commissioners. Eighty percent of the business that should have been covered by this GA was pushed to the 2022 GA. All of which made for a disappointing GA.

The laments of this General Assembly were set against the laments that beset the world these days. We have a pandemic that has engulfed the entire world. We have a global recession brought on by the pandemic. We have a racial reckoning in our country, brought on by the senseless death of a black man at the hands of white police officers. And it is hard to see where any of this is getting any better.

It was against this backdrop that our General Assembly was held, and it was these lamentable realities that infused



### **how shall we pray?**

we are tired,  
God of this weary year,  
we are tired of going to  
bed exhausted  
and then taking hours  
to fall asleep,  
or falling asleep  
quickly, only to wake  
up  
about 2 in the morning  
and lying awake.  
we are tired of waking  
up worn out  
and dreading to turn on  
the news  
or open the door to  
grab the paper,  
knowing how the  
stories will wear us out.  
we don't know if we  
need more caffeine,  
more hope, more  
grace, more what,  
but we are tired.

how shall we pray?  
we are tired, Jesus of  
the deserted places,  
we are tired of not  
being able to go  
shopping  
and worn down by our  
fears of going into a  
store.  
we are tired of having  
to order everything  
delivered  
and then exhausted  
from wondering about  
the health  
and protocols of the  
delivery person.

all of us who were called to make decisions for the national church. And yet, it was out of these laments that glimmers of hope began to emerge.

I found hope in the workings of our national church. I don't often think about what it takes to run the whole Presbyterian denomination, but at GA, I caught a glimpse of what is going on. I was particularly impressed at how the budgets for the next two years put together and how our denomination is compensating for the expected drop in revenue due to the recession. I saw a denomination that is attentive to the situation in the churches, flexible in its operation, and faithful in its stewardship. I found hope in the election of Rev. Gregory Bentley and Ms. Elona Street-Stewart as our new co-moderators and in the re-election of our Stated Clerk, J. Herbert Nelson. These are dynamic and visionary leaders for our church in a time that needs visionary leadership.

While most of the business was moved to 2022, this GA did address the situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. I found hope as the GA called all of our churches to stand with each other during this crisis. The crisis is affecting each church differently. Some have been devastated by the disease itself, with dozens of members struck down. Others are suffering from the lockdowns and struggling to develop new ministries in a time of separation. Still others are suffering financially as members lose jobs or take pay cuts. And then there are churches that have found new ways to thrive in this difficult environment and are experiencing energy and growth. Our GA asked all of us to find ways to care and support each other as Presbyterians not only to share the burden but to realize that God continues to be at work, even in the midst of a pandemic. We also acknowledged that the church is called to address the injustices brought to light by this pandemic and to help our society address the issues that make this pandemic so much harder on some. This GA set aside October 25, Reformation Sunday, as a day of prayer for responding to the challenges of Covid-19.

By far, the most significant action of this General Assembly was in response to the crisis of racism in our society. Even though most of the business of this GA was routine approvals, time was set aside to address the issue of the present moment and we took that time and ran with it. In several hours of discussion and debate on Friday, this General Assembly made a strong statement on racial justice for the church. A rather mild motion was put forward at by the Office of the General Assembly, but this

we are weary of the  
same people saying the  
same demeaning,  
distracting words,  
downplaying this crisis,  
and we are frazzled by  
those who ignore  
injustices.

we don't know if we  
need more caffeine,  
more hope, more  
grace, more what,  
but we are tired.

how shall we pray?  
we are tired,

Spirit of fresh winds  
and new lives,  
we are tired of people  
sharing foolishness on  
social media and  
irritated at ourselves  
for being sucked in by  
such posts.

we are weary of those  
who care only for  
themselves,  
even as they proclaim  
great compassion for  
the sick and dying.

we are exhausted by  
this weariness which  
won't go away,  
and we are worn down  
to the nubs of our souls  
by worry.

we don't know if we  
need more caffeine,  
more hope, more  
grace, more what,  
but we are tired.

how shall we pray?  
we don't know if we  
need more caffeine,  
more hope, more  
grace, more what,

General Assembly would have none of it. A substitute motion was introduced and approved that began with these words:

"This 224th General Assembly of the PC(USA) declares that Black lives matter; that our country's most important institutions have been built to sustain white privilege, to protect white lives and white property at the expense of our siblings of color; and that the church, through ignorance, denial, and in some cases deliberate action, has participated in this injustice. We have been slow to face the reality of systemic racism. We have been slow to acknowledge the pain of our fellow Presbyterians, of our fellow Christians, of our fellow citizens, and of those who have come to America for a better life, whose value has been judged by the color of their skin. We pledge to join hands and hearts with our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) siblings to actively confront and dismantle systemic racism in our church and in society at large, and to work for a more just, merciful, and peaceful country that allows all of God's children to flourish."

Following this were a series of recommendations that we would should educate ourselves on racial issues so that we might better understand what has been happening and what continues to happen in our country, and that we in the churches and the presbyteries take actions to dismantle systemic racism in our society. Given the limits of our particular GA gathering, this was probably as much as we could do. But certainly, the hope is that this statement will push all Presbyterians to work for a more just society.

We ended our GA business with a time of silence that was 8 minutes and 46 seconds long. That was the most powerful moment of the whole GA for me-that moment of prayerful silence. It was a moment to honor life and reflect on God's call to justice. Years from now I will not remember the debates or even the actions of this GA, but I will remember that time of silence. And in that silence, a silence brought on by lament, I found hope-hope in a God who is still at work in our world...and in my life.

### **PSV 2021 Budgeting Process Begins...**

*By Christine Burns, CPO Budget Task Team*

It's that time of year again! The presbytery has been working on the first reading figures for the budget for 2021. The Presbytery Commissions have put together their first-round estimates for next year's budget designed to carry on the essential Presbytery programs designed to support our congregations and pastors. Your Commission for Presbytery Operations' members are doing their best to

but we are tired,  
God in Community,  
Holy in One,  
so just hold us in our  
weariness, we pray.  
amen.

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### **PRAYERS FOR...**

The Reverend John Stull, Honorably Retired Minister Member of Scioto Valley. John has been experiencing failing health and is being cared for by hospice. Our prayers are with John, his wife, Betty Lou, family and friends during this difficult time.

present a balanced budget to the body of the presbytery. However, everything we do depends on your support through the continued payment of per capita. Per capita provides the necessary income stream that funds the work of our presbytery and denominational activities, programs and expenses. We thank the congregations who have continued to support per capita especially in these uncertain times. We know that the burdens of the pandemic have placed some of us in the midst of difficult decisions for our planned budgets. Thank you does not seem like enough words to express our gratitude for your continued giving. The burden is always lighter when it is shared. If you have not paid your per capita, either this year or for some time, please help your sister churches by sending it in now. Every per capita dollar is needed to continue to provide essential functions, services, and programs. Let's go into the year 2021 with a renewed commitment to help achieve a balanced budget.

## **Guidance to Congregations Considering Re-Opening**

*Elder James A. Wilson, PSV Temporary Stated Clerk*

As congregations consider returning to in-person worship or re-opening their buildings, Sessions must be mindful of both their legal and fiduciary duty to take reasonable steps to minimize the risk of spreading Covid-19 infections by worship or other church activities and their ordination vows to "watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service" (W-4.0404b) and "give[s] full expression to the rich diversity of the church's membership" (G-3.0103). This includes assessing whether a plan promotes expanding those who can worship or has the effect of excluding individuals whose risk factors prevent participation in in-person worship. In carrying out these obligations, we strongly urge Sessions to consider the following guidance for congregational safety:

<https://psvonline.org/publication/guidance-to-congregations-considering-reopening-james-a-wilson/>

## **Same Deck, Same Chairs, Same Perspective? Maybe Not!**

*By Christine Burns, CRE*

We have come to use the term "re-arranging the deck chairs" with a pretty negative connotation. But if you are a person who sits on the deck and watches the moon, a slight movement of the chair can give an entirely different view of the world around you. Maybe it is an umbrella obscuring the full moon or a tree sitting in just the wrong place.



As a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE), a pastor, trained by our presbytery almost exclusively by per capita support, I have been excited to give back and to serve the presbytery from many chairs on the deck. On the congregational level, sometimes it is the unfortunate truth that we have chairs no one is willing to fill. I have been a part of the Commission for Congregational Life and now the Commission for Operations. I have served on various administrative commissions, from new worshipping communities to gracious separations, with investigative committees in the midst. In short, I work a lot in committee, sometimes with the same people, even some who do not like change. Imagine that! Sometimes in these leadership roles we just shift the people from one place to another, the same people doing different things. The criticism of these re-arrangements comes as others begin to feel the sense of insider thinking and believe that things never change. I don't deny that is a possibility, but it is short-sighted to assume that status quo is the inevitable result of re-arranging the deck chairs. Sometimes we find ourselves sitting in the wrong chair for this time or that time, unable to see the clear vision for what lies ahead for ourselves. Moving to another seat can open up a new path for thoughts and actions to take foothold and improve what lies before us. Sometimes we must vacate the deck completely to make room for other minds with fresh ideas. The real danger in "re-arranging the deck chairs" is really only when you do not stand up, look around at what is happening in the world, and choose to move your chair to see a clearer horizon. If you just sit where you are, somehow expecting the moon to decide to search you out, you may be waiting a very long time and may never find the optimum explosive beauty of a night sky. You might never realize your full potential. And there is one more thing to ponder. When you either vacate your chair, or you move it just slightly to the side, you make room on the deck for more chairs and more people with hope and vision for a better kinship and tomorrow.

### **Worthington Presbyterian Church is seeking a Membership and Data Coordinator**

The Worthington Presbyterian Church is seeking a part-time Membership and Data Coordinator. This position is 30 hours per week, primarily during normal operating hours Monday-Friday, with the occasional evening or weekend as needed. If you or someone you know is interested in this position, please click on the following link for a position description: <https://www.worthingtonpresbyterian.com/employment-opportunities.html>.

Interested persons should e-mail a cover letter, resume, and the names and contact information for three references to [employment@worthingtonpresbyterian.com](mailto:employment@worthingtonpresbyterian.com).

### **Granville First Presbyterian Church is seeking a Temporary Senior High Youth Coordinator**

First Presbyterian Church in Granville, Ohio, is calling a person to fill the position of Temporary Senior High Youth Coordinator through May 2021. If you are interested, or know of someone, please see the following link for more information <https://www.granpres.org/openinterimposition>.

Interested parties should email a cover letter and resume to Ellen Clark, Director of Christian Education and Faith Formation at [eclark@granpres.org](mailto:eclark@granpres.org).

## An Opportunity for Churches to Reach Out in Education for Children... By Reverend Neil MacQueen

Are you interested in opening up a part of your church building this fall during the weekdays to tutor small groups or individual children? If so, please contact Neil MacQueen, email: [neilmacqueen@gmail.com](mailto:neilmacqueen@gmail.com), or see the links below. Church, Parents, and Learning Pods discussion, ideas, and resource links are available at [rotation.org](http://rotation.org)!  
<https://www.rotation.org/topic/how-can-churches-help-parents-with-schooling-challenges>

## Working Together to be the Church in Niger

World Mission July 29, 2020- God is at work across boundaries of space and culture  
LOUISVILLE - Although mission co-workers Rachel and Michael Ludwig were pained to leave Niger when the State Department ordered citizens to return to the U.S., they believe they are still having a lasting impact through partnership bridges they have built since they answered the call to serve there in 2014. Michael, was an associate pastor at [Overbrook Presbyterian Church](#) in Columbus, Ohio, for four years prior to entering mission service. He is a member of the [Presbytery of Scioto Valley](#). To read the article go to:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/working-together-to-be-the-church-in-niger>

## PSV CONGREGATIONS ARE BECOMING MATTHEW 25 CONGREGATIONS...

Congratulations to the 9 congregations of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley who have applied for and have been designated as Matthew 25 churches within the PC (USA). These congregations have answered the call to accept the Matthew 25 invitation. Matthew 25:31-46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. By accepting the Matthew 25 invitation, you can help your church and our denomination become a more relevant presence in the world. We recognize Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious.



The 9 PSV congregations who have already committed to be Matthew 25 congregations are: West Berlin Presbyterian Church in Delaware, First Presbyterian Church in Waverly, Overbrook Presbyterian Church in Columbus, First Presbyterian Church in Athens, First Presbyterian Church in Grove City, Plain City Presbyterian Church, Condit Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church in London and Broad Street Presbyterian Church in Columbus. Additional congregations are in the process of affirming this call along with the Presbytery. This call commits congregations and the presbytery to work towards Building Congregational Vitality, Identifying and Dismantling Structural Racism, and Eradicating Systemic Poverty.

Go to <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/matthew-25-sign-up-my-congregation> and complete an application to sign up your church. Join others in our presbytery and across the denomination in a common purpose to bring alive the commitment to "serve the least of these" in our communities and around the world.

## The NEW 2020-21 Presbyterian Planning Calendars have arrived!

This 16-month calendar starts with September 2020 and ends with December 2021. It contains many planning aids for pastors and other church leaders. This popular calendar includes lectionary information for Sundays and special days, liturgical days, liturgical colors, resource information for PC(USA) programmatic emphases, updated synod, presbytery and Presbyterian Mission Agency staff directories, a color fold-out synod/presbytery and world maps. The cost is \$10 each.

For information, or to get your calendars, contact [dagmar@psvonline.org](mailto:dagmar@psvonline.org)

## PASTORS OF PSV WEEKLY CHAT MEETING ON ZOOM

*Reverend Ann Melick, Presbytery Commission for Church Professionals*

Join our online chats on Thursdays to give and receive encouragement and practical advice during this unusual and changing time of ministry. To join this gathering of our pastors at 1 pm each Thursday.

To join: <https://zoom.us/j/588789104?pwd=cDBEUm8yYnNIS0RUk3dwZG5KVFMvZz09>

Meeting ID: 588 789 104, Password: 463317,

One tap mobile+13126266799, 588789104#

## Presbyterian Women (PW) in the Presbytery of Scioto Valley Special announcement.



Due to the pandemic of Covid-19, the August Gathering has been cancelled. Please make sure your PW Sisters are aware of this as this notice is only being emailed. There will be a full newsletter in September regarding the October 24, 2020, Gathering plans. Our theme for 2020-2021 is "Overflow with Hope" taken from the above scripture from Romans. Who could have imagined how appropriate this would be when it was chosen

in February when the CT last met in person? The CT is aware that most PWs have not met in person either for many months. Some are having Zoom meetings, but it is still a very difficult time for most of us to feel any "togetherness". Please continue to pray for the world, our country and government leaders in all levels, our churches and their leaders, and each other.

## Stated Meetings of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley (PSV) in 2020

September 15, 2020, 3:30 p.m. -7:30 p.m.

November 17, 2020, 3:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

For the latest news and information from the Presbytery of Scioto Valley and its churches, visit [www.psvonline.org](http://www.psvonline.org). Telephone: 614-847-0565 or 800-244-7207; Fax: 614-847-4359