



Issue 9

Please note: Publications from the Presbytery are best viewed on a computer.

Church Events and Outreach Ministries

We want to stay connected with our churches and highlight every single one! To best fulfill that effort, we need to know all the events, ministries, services and collaborations for which your church is known.

Please [complete this survey](#) of simple check boxes so we can plan to share your story soon!

2026 Presbytery Directory

The deadline to submit information has passed! If you need to Change anything, please let us know ASAP at info@wvpresbytery.org.

If you would like to [request a hard copy](#) of the Presbytery Directory, please let us know by April 6. There is a suggested donation of \$13.00 to offset cost of printing and mailing.

The Presbytery Directory may also be accessed online with a password please contact a member of Staff for the password or email info@wvpresbytery.org.

Montreat Youth Conference II

Youth in grades 8-12 and adults over 21 are invited to Montreat's Youth Conference II in Montreat, NC, from Saturday, June 14 to Saturday, June 20, 2026. Find more details and the registration forms [here](#).

Maureen Wright, Lead Presbyter & Stated Clerk

leadpresbyter@wvpresbytery.org

- Support the congregations of the Presbytery and be present in their life and worship
- Execute the mission and vision of the Presbytery in partnership with Presbytery leaders and staff
- Partner with the Leadership Team to implement the Strategic Plan
- Support the work of the commissions and committees of the Presbytery with particular emphasis on the Leadership Team, Commission on Operations, Commission on Pastoral Ministry, Committee on Representation, and commissions to dissolve
- Head of Staff including questions or concerns about staff
- Serve as Stated Clerk:
 - Presbytery and Session records including minutes, minute reviews and Statistical Reports
 - Questions regarding the Book of Order and parliamentary procedure
 - Clerk of Session training
 - Judicial Process

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Sanderson-Doughty, Connectional Presbyter

connectionalpresbyter@wvpresbytery.org

- Leadership Development (ALP/CP training, youth leadership formation, officer training, continuing education for pastoral leaders)
- Network Formation (mission partnerships, collaboration with neighboring congregations, formation of affinity groups)
- Intentional Listening (church visitation, relationship building, need for support)
- Education (youth ministry, retreats, Christian Education for all ages)

Chris Alfred, Treasurer and Business Administrator

treasurer@wvpresbytery.org

- Shared mission
- Per capita
- Church Remittances
- Background Checks
- Invoices, Payments
- Presbytery Calendar
- Board of Pensions
- Pastor Terms of Call
- Church Finance/Accounting Help
- Stewardship
- General Office Inquires
- Presbytery Directory Updates





Kristin Rhodes, Communications Coordinator

communications@wvpresbytery.org

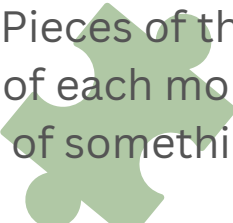
- Pieces of the Presbytery
- Magnify the Message
- Email Announcements
- Social Media
- Website Updates
- Creative Design/ Presbytery Branding

Session Record Review Events 2026

Clerks of Session are invited to attend the Session Record Review for 2025 minutes. Clerks of Session (or a representative) will need to attend an event by October 2026. The events are:

-  **April 12 – Greater Bridgeport/ Clarksburg Area in person event, 3:00 PM**
-  **April 13 – Zoom event, 3:00 PM**
-  August – Greater Lewisburg Area in person event & Zoom event, dates TBD
-  October – Greater Huntington Area in person event & Zoom event, dates TBD

The checklists for the 2025 record review events can be found [here](#). Please use the correct form for the type of event you attend. If you have any questions, [contact the Stated Clerk, Maureen Wright](#).



Pieces of the Presbytery is distributed the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. If you wish to include an announcement or share photos of something your church has done, please send it to [Kristin Rhodes](#) by the second and fourth Tuesday of the month.



Issue 6 of Magnify the Message is here! [This issue](#) shares Lenten and Easter traditions that congregations and community members from Point Pleasant Presbyterian, Gilbert Presbyterian, First Presbyterian, Kenova, and First Presbyterian, Huntington, anticipate each year.

Background Checks

To help with data security the Presbytery has moved to a secure encrypted service with box.com to upload private information for background checks. When requesting a background check please either mail to:

Presbytery of West Virginia
PO Box 11720

Charleston, WV 25339

or upload consent forms via the link below or on the website. If you need any assistance, please contact Chris Alfred.

[Background Check Consent Form](#)

[Upload Background checks](#)

Grant for BOP Dependent Medical Coverage

At the November 2025 Meeting the Presbytery voted to give \$1,200 grants for 2026 to help churches cover medical dues for congregational pastors with dependent medical coverage. If your church qualifies, please email a request to the Presbytery Treasurer with a copy of your most recent 2026 Board of Pension Statement. This grant will be paid in two installments, once in the spring and the second in the fall.

Church Annual Financial Review Resources

It's that time of year again to conduct our annual financial reviews, as required by the Book of Order (G-3.0113). These reviews are more than a constitutional requirement, they are an important expression of faithful stewardship and accountability. An annual financial review helps ensure that proper procedures are being followed, resources are handled with integrity, and the congregation can have confidence in the church's financial practices. By completing this review each year and utilizing the available resources, churches strengthen transparency, protect those who handle funds, and demonstrate their commitment to responsible and ethical ministry.

[FINANCIAL REVIEW CHECKLIST- from the PCUSA](#)

The Volunteer's Audit Guide for Churches & other Non-Profits is available [on Amazon](#).

PCUSA Group Ruling- <https://www.pcusagroupruling.org/einstart>

There are times when a church will need a copy of its 501C3 letter, which is from the IRS and under the blanket of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (TechSoup is an example of a vendor that would need a 501c3 letter if someone is creating an account with them.) Use the link above to request the letter from the PCUSA A Corporation General Counsel.

Upcoming Events at our Churches

Riverlawn/ St. Albans

- Palm Sunday / Easter Cantata - the choir, accompanied by a 12-piece orchestra, will present the cantata Calvary's Lamb during the 10:30 service. Join us as we celebrate Palm Sunday and a morning of special music.
- Good Friday Tenebrae — You are invited to a special time of worship on April 3, at 7:00 PM, at First Presbyterian Church, St. Albans. The service of Tenebrae progresses from light to dark. Tenebrae means “Shadows.” As each candle is extinguished, it symbolizes the shadows that surrounded Jesus and the cross. Please join us as we remember in such a powerful way the sacrifice of our Savior. The annual Tenebrae is a joint offering of First, Highlawn, and Riverlawn Presbyterian Churches of St. Albans and First Presbyterian of Nitro.
- St. Albans Easter Sunrise — Join us on Sunday, April 5, at 7:00 AM, behind the Upper Mausoleum of Cunningham Memorial Park, as we celebrate our Risen Savior! Pastor Chris will be offering the meditation this year. Come and see! The tomb is empty! He is risen!
- Flowering of the Cross — Join us on Easter, April 5, at 10:30 AM, as we proclaim the Resurrection of Jesus and testify to the new life we have in him! During worship, all will have opportunity to flower the cross as a testament to the life that has burst forth from the grave!

SAVE THE DATE



**An evening of live music, dancing,
food, drinks, and a silent auction.**

Raising funds for
**Saturday of
Service**, a project
of Edgewood
Presbyterian
Church, serving
food and
fellowship to the
community.

Saturday
March 28, 2026
6:30p – 11p

**WVSOM
Student Center**

Sponsored by
**WVSOM Christian Medical
Dental Association**

Living Matthew 25: Feeding the Hungry, Serving with Love



Summer 2026

I want to ...

Come to Camp!

Camp Dates:

Week 1: June 21-27

Week 2: July 1-4

Register Online Feb-1st !

bluestonecamp.org

Scholarships are available!

Work at Camp!

Paid Staff Positions:

Resident Counselor

High School Graduate
College Ages 17+

CIT Support Staff

High School Jrs & Srs

Service Support

Kitchen; Lifeguard

Volunteers Welcome Too!

Camp Nurse; Keyleaders; Crafts & More!

Bring the Whole Family!

Family Camps:

Half-Week #1: June 24-17

Half Week #2: July 1-4

Summer Send-Off

Retreat: July 3-5

Get Some More Info!

Web: bluestonecamp.org

Email: mark@bluestonecamp.org

Phone: call (304) 397-5050 and
leave a voicemail

[Click here for a printable
PDF to distribute at
your church!](#)

Portions of Hope: Lessons from the Lead Presbyter

Following my election as Lead Presbyter and Stated Clerk I invited the Presbytery to join a conversation on hope. In previous articles I have reflected on how hope showed up in my interviews with the search committee. I have shared Christ's invitation to abide in hope while exploring what hope means for the Presbytery of West Virginia and its churches. At the Presbytery meeting in February, I affirmed that "we are a Presbytery of hope".

To engage in a conversation on hope, there is a need for a shared or common language of hope. This reminds me of my high school English teacher, Mrs. Weiss. Mrs. Weiss was a fantastic teacher, but her standards were high. In addition to her well known commitment to flunk essays with more than two misspellings (there were dictionaries even before spell check), she did not allow students to define words or concepts using the word in its definition. How do we reflect on hope, build a common language of hope, without using the word hope?

I have been paying attention when I hear the word hope. Hope is everywhere. Many of you are familiar with TED Talks. There is an entire playlist of TED Talk videos about hope. From The Science and Power of Hope by Chan Hellman, a professor at the University of Oklahoma and director of The Hope Research Center, to It All Begins with Hope by Juanita Flowers, founder of a mission-driven cookie company, to 3 Lessons on Hope in Challenging Times by Wajahat Ali, American writer, journalist, public speaker, and "recovering attorney". There is even a collection by Bono, Irish born singer, songwriter, activist, and philanthropist of U2 fame – 8 Talks that Give Me Hope.

According to Google, the word hope appears in the Bible 130 – 180 times, with a "fairly even distribution between the Old and New Testaments". If you dig deeper the number of biblical occurrences may be 360 or 167, or nearly a 100 depending on the translation. The basis of a previous strategic plan for the Presbytery was based on Jeremiah 29:11 that ends with God's words, "to give you a future with hope". The Psalms often reference hope – Psalm 33: 18 or

Psalm 71: 14. Paul writes often in his letters of hope especially in Romans and Thessalonians.

Even a brief entry for hope in a Bible Dictionary, provides a plethora of information on hope including this definition, “in the Bible the expectation of a favorable future under God’s direction”. (Harper’s Bible Dictionary, 1985.)

Far less academic, Google AI offers this definition of hope, “Hope is a positive, active mindset characterized by the confident expectation of a desired, better future, often persisting despite uncertainty or adversity. It involves trust, willpower, and developing pathways to achieve goals, differing from mere optimism by including active anticipation of positive outcomes.” (Google, March 25, 2026.)

As we move into this conversation of hope, we need to build a shared, common language of hope. I believe that the foundation of the common language is that hope is a verb, it is action. It is expectation, it is anticipation. I recently read the novel Truth Be Told by Patricia Raybon. There is a scene in the book where the Rev. Jack Blake preaches about hope, “Down and out? Then hope! Can’t find your way? Then hope! Hit a Brick wall? Then hope! Get knocked down? Then hope! Hope is the one who is hope...Like prayer, we hope with our boots on.” (Tyndall House Publishers, Inc., 2024. Pages 286 and 288.)

I believe that the foundation of a common language is that hope is a verb, it is action. God calls us to hope. Hope actively, hope with the belief that God will be with the people of God. Hope with your boots on.

What will you add to this common language of hope?

To easily find past remarks from our Lead Presbyter, please visit our website, select the communications tab, and then the Portions of Hope: Lessons from the Lead Presbyter tab under Communications.

