



The Clifton Messenger

Clifton Presbyterian Church

<https://www.cliftonpresbyterianchurch.com>

Vol. 2: Issue 7

July/August 2020



Vesper Services in the Park

July 15

8:00pm

At their meeting on Sunday June 28 the Worship Committee met via teleconference to discuss a special Vespers Service in Mackey Park during the summer. Approval was given, and now while much is being planned at the moment of the release of this Newsletter, here is what we do know. The date is Wednesday Evening, July 15 at 8:00pm. Everyone will be allowed to drive down toward the Gazebo of the park and remain in their cars, or they may put a lawn chair around their car away from everyone. There will be singing and prayers and a special evening of worship as the sun sets in west. **The Rev. Stephen Baldwin**, Ronceverte Presbyterian Church has been invited to share some words with us, and he has agreed. **Julie Gillilan** will be able to play for us with a keyboard for lots of favorite hymns (start getting a list to the Office soon so that we can sing some favorites that night). There will be no close social contact with others, and the proper C-19 protocols will be maintained. No food will be served. A good and meaningful time will be had by all.

Invite your friends and other churches to be a part of this C-19 Worship Festival in the Park. We will be safe in distancing and practice. It will be a great Summer worship event.



We are still a Matthew 25 people.....

Office Ramblings



Wow, Summer is rolling and by the time you read this the 4th of July will have passed. Where is the time getting to in this year of 2020. I believe that this is one year I will be glad to see pass on through as it seems to have everything taking place. But I will have to admit that I would agree with one person who said that this could be the best year of your life as you survive and thrive in the struggles. We are doing that and more. There are good things taking place. We have had more viewers to our service on Facebook-Live than one would ever imagine; we have had a chance to examine what is important to us as a church; our worship services have been blessed by wonderful gifts of sharing by many talented folks; we are learning that using local and buying local is great; we are learning the virtues can of a slower time; we have had time to reassess what we want in our church and what is important; and for me I have to say I have learned how truly giving so many people are as they go through times of such uncertainty.. Now with all that said I truly say that I am ready to move forward.



The Worship continues at the Sanctuary at Clifton during this pandemic. It is different for certain, but we continue to come together looking for new alternatives to worship. One of the bright spots of the worship service during this period of time has been our Facebook Live presence. Due to the leadership of our Outreach Committee Chair, **Kereshmeh Kashefian**, we have been able to go as a Matthew 25 church into much of the literal world. We have listeners now to our services on the not just in the States, but in continents all over the World. The number of States who tune into our worship on Facebook is unbelievable. Of course of great interest to all of us is our own membership who cannot come back to the building of the church due to health and other concerns, and they are with

us each Sunday. What a wonderful success that this has become.



While the answers to those questions are hard to give at the moment, be assured that we are working on finding our way back to a somewhat normal experience. We are working on developing special music; we are working on Sunday School; we are working on safety issues in the church; and we are working on making everyone have the opportunity to worship the Lord.



The one area with which we are working is how to get our Christian Education back on track since we are gone so much. **Suzy Meadows**, chair of Christian Education and I have been meeting to present some ideas to the Session. We are talking about a unified Education program for all of the classes with the emphasis on Matthew 25 directions. We are also talking about weekly Bible Study times, and a possible book readers discussion group. Much to think about that is for sure. One of the important considerations is how do we contact the people who are unable to be at church. We may have to develop an on-line education program. Lots of work ahead for sure.



Well that is all I will say for this summer edition. My days are kind of busy right now on the farm trying to maintain large gardens and to mow and bale hay and to stay ahead of all that is taking place. There is much ahead that is for sure. The question to be asked: Are you ready? -Ron



SESSION NEWS and NOTES

By R. Houston Arbuckle, Clerk of Session

The Session of Clifton Presbyterian Church, Maxwelton, WV, met for the stated June meeting on Sunday, June 7, 2020 at 12: 00 noon in the fellowship room of the church. Those in attendance were moderator, Susan Sharp Campbell; temporary pastor, Ron Miller; session members: Jim Miller, Suzy Meadows, Carol Hoover, Larry Davis, Teresa Bostic, Kereshmeh Kashefian, Lynne Bostic, and Houston Arbuckle, Clerk of Session. Venetta Wright was present by telephone.

Moderator, **Susan Sharp Campbell**, opened the meeting with prayer and declared a quorum. The minutes of the April 5, 2019 stated session meeting and May 24, 2020 called meeting were approved.

The financial report for March 2020 was received: The General fund showed an excess income of \$1,675.16. The Memorial fund received \$200.35 from donations and paid out \$395.57, leaving a balance of \$46,396.29. Cents-Ability offering for March was \$84.73. Stone Soup paid out \$500 for medical expenses and \$134 from the Souper Bowl offering, to the Communities in Schools leaving a balance \$2,869.19

The financial report for April 2020 was received: The General fund showed an excess income of **\$35.21** The Memorial fund paid out \$1000 to the Greater Greenbrier Long Term Recovery Committee, leaving a balance of \$45,396.63. Cents-Ability offering for March was \$30.00. The One Great Hour of Sharing offering was \$25. Stone Soup now has a balance of \$2,869.21.

The Clerk reported for the record the death of long time member and elder, **Melvin Eugene Bostic**, on April 7, 2020. Worship attendance in the sanctuary for May 31, Pentecost, celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the Sunday that the sanctuary reopened, was 19. Our on-line worship services have been well received. The average number of views on Facebook for 11 weeks was 241; there were 186 views for Good Friday Worship and 342 views for Easter Sun Rise Worship. The Presbytery of WV has rescheduled the **Festival of Faith for August 29** (on-line only). All committee chairs are putting together a list of members so the church's work can continue during the summer. Check with the chair of your favor committee as soon as possible.

The session approved paying the Greenbrier County Health Department \$100 to renew the commercial kitchen license.

Jim Miller, Chair of the Property, moved to open Charlie Mackey Park's shelter and restrooms for

community use. The sponsor of any activity held in the park must take the responsibility of keeping the facility sanitized and this requirement will be made clear on the park's handout. This motion passed.

Larry Davis, Chair of the Mission Committee summarized the 2020 expenditures from the Mission Committee's budget. From the budgeted amount of \$5500 the Mission Committee has appropriated \$500 to the Shepherd's Center of the Greenbrier Valley; \$500 to Bluestone Camp and Retreat; \$500 to Greater Greenbrier Long term Relief Committee (COVID-19 Response); \$500 to Presbyterian Disaster Relief Assistance (COVID-19 Response); and \$500 to Feeding Seniors (COVID-19 Response).

Pastor Ron Miller reported he would like to return to working with committees as soon as possible. The Clifton Messenger will have a single issue for July and August.

In **Other BUSINESS**, the session approved holding future vesper services or other church activities in the park as long as the activity meets the COVID-19 safety guidelines.

The July Stated Session Meeting will be July 5, 2020 at 12:30 p.m. using conference calling.

Pastoral concerns of the church were discussed, and Ron Miller adjourned the meeting with the prayer.

Prayer Concerns

Brownie Dunn, Sue Wyman, Buddy Baker, Marie Reynolds, Max Gibson, Margert Hedrick, Becky Godby, Jennifer Skaggs, Doug Arbuckle, Suzanne Pierce, Charles & Jean Moody, Wilma Reynolds, Mary Elmore, Jenny McClung, Krishna Wright, Covid-19 infections, the Nation at this time, Our church, The Crossroads Committee, and others illnesses and despair and sickness





Our own **Nima ShahabShahmir** was selected to present his Senior Research from WVU Tech to the American Society of Engineering

Education on June 23. Nima said that *“this was an almost 4 month process since my advisor and I had to submit multiple versions of the research paper to be finalized by ASEE professors.”*

The conference was originally planned to be held in Montréal, Canada but due to the C-19 pandemic situation, it was moved to an online event. Nima stated, *“I will be presenting the research as well as demonstrating a few of the applications developed during the research.”*

I will present my research on June 23rd at 11:40am and will demonstrate a demo of some of the Augmented Reality applications developed during the research.”

This research was done by Nima in his Senior year at WVU Tech. The research has been supported by West Virginia University Institute of Technology and funded by NASA West Virginia Space Grant Consortium.

Way to go Nima!

Lynn Bostic, one of the Elders on our Session, and the Chair of the Congregational Care Committee is starting a new job this summer. She will be working for the Pocahontas County Board of Education as their new Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Federal



Programs. Lynn has worked for over 20 years in Greenbrier County Education, and she is excited to start this new adventure and position. Her work and influence will be missed in Greenbrier County, but we are happy to continue to have her as an active leader in our Church.

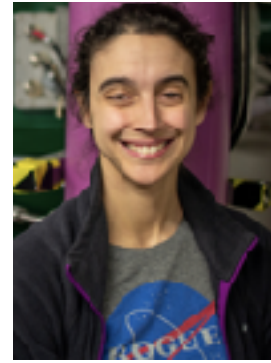


Photo by U.T. of Knoxville

Elizabeth “Mae” Scott graduated from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville with a PhD. in Nuclear Physics this year. She is the daughter of **Dr. David Scott** and **Dr. Deb Schmidt** of our community. She is the granddaughter of long time Clifton member and leader, the late **Jim Scott**.

While she is presently doing research, she did an interview for a paper last Spring which she stated, *“Mentoring has been rejuvenating for me, which is why I want to teach. I want to help others find what I found exciting about physics. When I see that initial spark of interest in someone, I’m going to feed that fire.”*

According to the interview Elizabeth also hopes to get more women into STEM fields, regardless of whether they pursue physics.

“I’m from West Virginia and growing up as a girl in a rural community, it was not expected for me to like science. But getting more women into science is beneficial for all involved,” she said. *“Rural communities like [those in] Appalachia can benefit from having more of their young people in science, the physics community can benefit from having scientists with different diverse backgrounds, and young women can feel empowered by getting involved with physics and math. It empowered me. I personally know how it can make you feel confident in the world, and I want to give more people that.”*

Congrats to Elizabeth “Mae” Scott, Ph.D. and her family. We would certainly welcome her back to this community to Make differences in many lives.



PC (USA) 224th General Assembly News

Rich Copley | Presbyterian News Service - June 27, 2020

The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II was re-elected as **Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)** Saturday morning by 94 percent of the commissioners to the **224th General Assembly**. Immediately after the election, in which 454 commissioners voted yes, Nelson spoke to churches and the moment the church as a whole finds itself in.



Herbert Nelson awaits the vote to approve a second term as Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA). Photo by Randy Hobson.

“Having the opportunity to live as a pastor the last 30-plus years, I’m still a pastor, in many different ways,” Nelson said. “I give thanks to folks who are out here struggling and pressing hard to get through these tough times that we find ourselves in, and to be open to new possibilities of ministry.

“I have over and over again said how grateful I was for these television preachers that we said we would never become television evangelists. Yet, as soon as the pandemic hit, every preacher turned into a television evangelist in one week,” Nelson said. “That’s the kind of energy, intelligence, imagination and love that we have to have for the gospel — the willingness to know that we’re going to hit some walls, we’re going to have some tough times. But digging and giving people a sense of what the gospel is ... may or may not in that moment deal with their potential reality of pain or hurt or feeling lost. But if we keep pushing, somewhere along the line there is a God who is far greater than any of us, and there is a savior who reminded us that you can go to the poor and the broken and the lost and the widow and all of the other folks who seem to be left out and yet make a

difference. And I’m convinced that is where the church has to be.”

“We cannot be locked inside of our buildings, and I believe even through this virus we have come to find out that the building is not essential to the work we have to do,” he said. “It is good to have one, but it is not essential to share the love of Jesus Christ and our heart for Christ in the work that we are being called to do.”

Reverend Gail Porter Nelson; J. Herbert Nelson; daughter Alycia Yvette Nelson; and his mother-in-law Alice Porter at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville. Photo by Randy Hobson.

As Nelson spoke, he was flanked by his wife, the Rev. Gail Porter Nelson; daughter Alycia Yvette Nelson; and his mother-in-law Alice Porter in the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, which was the nerve center for the historic General Assembly. The gathering had originally been planned for Baltimore, but it was converted to a shortened, online assembly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nelson is a third-generation Presbyterian pastor who led churches in Tennessee and North Carolina before becoming director of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s **Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C.**

When he was first elected Stated Clerk at the 222nd General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, Nelson became the first African American to lead the more than 300-year-old denomination. The next Stated Clerk election will be at the 226th General Assembly, slated for Salt Lake City.

Nelson stood unopposed for his second four-year term as Stated Clerk. Wilson Kennedy, chair of the **Stated Clerk Nominating Committee**, said the committee received one other inquiry about the position, but that person chose not to pursue it.

Putting forth Nelson’s name for nomination, Kennedy said, “J. Herbert’s call to this office is undeniable.

(Cont. on Pg. 6-224th General Assembly)

(Con't. from Pg. 5 224th General Assembly)

“J. Herbert serves with a scholar’s precision and nimbleness, a pastor’s heart, an advocate’s fire for justice, and an executive’s vision. Our committee was convinced that his unique set of skills were the right combination of scholastic pedigree and professional experience needed to provide strategic and prophetic leadership at this moment in our church’s history.”

Ruling Elder Elona Street-Stewart, who was [elected last week to be co-moderator of the 224th General Assembly along with the Rev. Gregory Bentley](#), presided over the election and installation process, which included question-and-answer sessions for both the nominating committee and the candidate. During that time Kennedy said the committee was satisfied Nelson sought to hear young voices in the church at all levels, and Nelson affirmed his desire to address climate justice, support small churches, and work to remove barriers to marginalized communities becoming fully involved in the church.

“Our growth in the life of this denomination is going to be racial ethnic persons who are immigrants coming into the life of this community,” Nelson said.

But he acknowledged there are currently barriers to full inclusion in the church for these communities, and that those need to be addressed. Those statements were later echoed as he reflected on how the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and subsequent uprising over racial injustice have in a few months impacted the church and perceptions of what church is.

“As a matter of fact, I don’t remember Jesus having a church house,” Nelson continued in his remarks after election. “I think every one he went into, he got thrown out of. There’s something about that kind of gospel that sticks to the core of who we are and sticks to the minds and lives of other people to do the transformative work that our Lord God has called us to do.

“And I believe we are not dying,” Nelson said. “We are reforming and becoming the church that God wants us to be.”

“Every now and then, you think about that Kool-Aid that does not taste good until you stir it up a little bit,” the Stated Clerk said. “We’re being stirred up now by a spirit that calls us to be the church we have to be in the 21st century, and until the stirring is over, it will not have what is needed to taste as good as it should.”

“But it will taste good,” he said. “Just keep stirring, find the right answer, and keep walking by faith.”

Covid-19 Virtual Worship



For those that wish to listen to the 11 AM Sunday Morning worship services via their telephone, there is a number to call. The spoken word from the pulpit is easy to understand, but Julie’s organ and piano music is

not transmitted very well the telephone.

The telephone connection is available every Sunday 20 minutes before the service so people can chat before their own audio input is muted a couple of minutes before the start of each service. Larry is the host at the church for this audio service, and he will explain the way to call in if you ask him. His phone number is 304-646-0602 and his email address is anldavis@suddenlink.net. Of course, he cannot answer his phone to explain how to do this from 10:30 AM to noon on Sundays.

Excellent live streaming video and replays of the services can be accessed from the Clifton Presbyterian Church Facebook Page. Many of these Facebook videos have been shared with Facebook friends, and the June 14 video had more than a thousand viewers. For many months of Sundays, Kereshmeh has contributed most excellently by providing this service for the church. For those with Internet access but no Facebook account, the videos are available as replays on the Clifton Presbyterian Church Youtube Channel.



Clifton Church on Mission as a *Matthew 25 Church*



All of the Mission Committee picks in June for donations were to organizations with a missions that provide help for people that are greatly suffering one way or another because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the first time, Clifton Presbyterian Church provided financial support to Doctors Without Borders, also known in French as Medecins Sans Frontieres or MSD. It is a 70-year-old international humanitarian medical non-governmental organization of French origin best known for its projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by endemic diseases. By 2019, the group was active in 70 countries with over 35,000 personnel mostly local doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, logistical experts, water and sanitation engineers and administrators. One of their responses to the pandemic is the provision of medical care to migrants and asylum-seekers trapped in Mexico in such places as Tijuana which is currently a hotspot.

To help West Virginians in dire need of food due to the economic impact of the pandemic, a donation was made to the

Mountaineer Food Bank that serves many counties from their headquarters in Gassaway. They provide food and other household items to over 450 feeding programs in 48 counties in West Virginia. Clifton Presbyterian Church helps regularly with the Lewisburg/Fairlea Food Locker food deliveries and donations that are a small part of our monthly Cents Ability offerings. Additional financial help is being provided to this program by our church this year.

The many forms of stress brought on by the isolation, economic duress, and fear related to the spread of COVID-19 and attempts to slow it down have already increased the incidence of domestic violence. The Family Refuge Center is definitely seeking more help so we are providing it.



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THESE IDEAS?

- 1. A Book Readers Group to read and discuss all kinds of books during the year?**
- 2. A *Matthew 25* Free Clothing Give-Away before the possible Starting of School Year?**
- 3. A weekly Bible Study Time?**

These are just some ideas that are being considered. Let us know what you want or wish to see or do as a church. What are your Ideas?



Charlie Mackey Park News for Summer of 2020

Dear Clifton Congregation,

The Session and Property committee have carefully planned for use of the Park this summer. With new rules for guests to sanitize the shelter and bathrooms both before and after use in addition to the general cleaning inside and out, we hope to do our best at serving the community. To be extra careful, we have hired Elizabeth Reed to clean mid-week.

The Park was not opened until mid-June so we missed several of our regular family reunions and children's birthday parties. I was most sorry to have to tell Brian Mackey no this year. He always has a reunion the last Saturday in May.

Clifton's relevant committees are working on planning a bring your own food and chairs and keep your distance by your car near the Gazebo along with an evening service with perhaps some entertainment. We currently are working on a Wed., July 15.

This is the current reservation situation for the remainder of summer: **JUNE-Sun., 5-** wedding, **Fri. 10 and Sat. 11-** set up and wedding, **Sun. 12,** family party, **Wed. 15,** Clifton evening get together, **Fri. 17,** family party, **Sat. 18,** family reunion, Sat. 25, Reunion,

Last June and **AUGUST, Fri. 31 and Aug. 1,** family party, **Tues. 4,** women's group gathering, **Fri. 14,** Open Doors staff workshop -daytime, **Fri. 21,** women's group gathering, **Fri. 28 and Sat. 29,** prep and wedding, **SEPT. 18th, 19th** prep and wedding, and **OCT. 27,** Sat., family reunion

Of course, changes may be required. We are thankful to have the Park and be able to use it along with the community as an outreach. -Submitted by Ann Davis

After much thought and consideration, Shepherd's Center of Greenbrier Valley has made the decision to move the Adventures in Learning (AIL) classes and the Community Service Award event to virtual happenings!

Our AIL classes will be presented via the Zoom platform of online meetings. There will be only one class per time slot allowing participants to access all of the classes. We have tried to pull in a variety of classes giving you the opportunity to possibly 'attend' a class you had not had the chance to try before.

You can take as many classes as you would like and if one is offered at a time you cannot 'attend', it will be recorded and will be available on our YouTube channel. You can then access that class at your convenience. There will be no registration fee, but we do ask that you consider a donation to Shepherd's Center for this service. The classes tentatively will begin September 28th and will last for 6 weeks. Be looking for the upcoming brochure!

Rich and Judy Lohmeyer from Alderson are our Community Award Recipients for 2020. COVID-19 has forced us to be creative and we are going to host our event via Facebook LIVE! Rich and Judy have done so much for the town of Alderson, Shepherd's Center and more! We don't want to postpone the event yet again, so decided to move forward! We will be making announcements as to when, where, etc. so be on the lookout for that information!

We are keeping busy with Gwen's Meals, Handy Helper, a few transportations, etc. We don't want to lose touch with our recipients throughout the county. Social isolation is a growing concern among our older adults and especially with the stay-at-home orders. If you know of anyone who might need a little help with their day to day living, give Shepherd's Center a call: 304-645-4196 or email our office:

***greenbriershepherdscenter@gmail.com** and we will see what we can do to keep them safe and secure in their home.*

God Bless and Stay Safe!

Teresa Bostic, Executive Director
Sarah Polk, Administrative Assistant
Shepherd's Center of Greenbrier Valley
PO Box 54, Lewisburg, WV 24901

A **Summer** Calendar

July 4



Independence Day

July 5

***Cents-ability Offering
Session meeting (Virtual Meeting)***

July 15



***Vespers in the Park
(See Front Page Story)***

August 2

***Cents-ability Offering
Session Meeting (In-Person)***

August 26



Possible Vespers/Concert in the Park

(Watch for Announcements)

August 30



Stone Soup Offering

August 31

September Newsletter Deadline

*Church Office Hours each Thursday 9:00am
–1:00pm
(Unless announced Otherwise)*

Contributors and Help on July/Aug Newsletter

**Larry Davis
Houston Arbuckle
Ann Davis
Teresa Bostic**

Alice Roth-Once again prepared our church mailing labels to be used for this Newsletter.



