



# The Clifton Messenger

Clifton Presbyterian Church

<https://www.cliftonpresbyterianchurch.com>

Vol. 3: Issue 2

February 2021



Why do we place the black smudge of ashes on our forehead every year at about this time of the year? Why do we go through this ritual in our faith? Well to answer that question is important for us to remember that Ash Wednesday marks the start of the Lenten period leading up to Easter. The ashes symbolize both death and repentance. It is during this period that we as Christians show repentance and mourning for our sins because we believe that Christ died for us as we wait for the Easter celebration event. Hence the commemoration of Ash Wednesday.

This year due to the horrific effects of the pandemic we will celebrate this event in a modified version. Ashes will be made available to you before the Wednesday service (you may pick them up at the church or have them mailed to you). You will have the opportunity to place the ashes yourself on that Ash Wednesday. The church will have a virtual service at 7:00pm on our Facebook Live page, and we shall have the church open for those wishing to have a quiet time of prayers of repentance and mourning from 7:30pm until 9:00pm. It will be a time in which you may “come & go” during your prayer time. In the name of safety and carefulness in this pandemic we ask that you wear a face covering and that you socially distance as you come to prayer.



*We are a Matthew 25 Church!!!  
(see page 4 for our Kick-Off Picture)*

See the Matthew 25 information on page 4 on the inside of the newsletter. These articles are dealing with the February presentations and the March book discussion with sister Matthew 25 churches in WV. Also thanks to all who participated in the prayer vigils with our sister churches in January as we prayed for the Peace and Unity needed during the week of January 17-20. The event was a great time of prayer as we unified as churches.

## Office Ramblings

As I finish the newsletter for February it is cold and snowy here at the farm.

The wind is blowing, and small specks of snow keep falling for most of this

day. I was shocked really at the amount of snow we have received so far this month. This has indeed been a colder winter so far. I know that it is a cliché to always keep saying it, but I am longing for Spring.



As I read the article on Page 7 of the newsletter about the Scout Troop meeting at the church, it brought back memories for me of when I was a member of the Cub Scouts. Our troop met here at the Clifton Church after school once a month. The Scout leaders were Mrs. Ruth Boone and Mrs. Dot Vaughn. The pastor of the church at the time was the Rev. Dean Bowyer. Now that was a few years ago. This church was the center of many community activities. Our 4-H club, the Bonnie Brae 4-H Club, also met here for a few years. We should be the meeting place for the community when possible.



Last year around Valentine's day we kicked-off our big Matthew 25 emphasis. Little did we expect this pandemic and the closing of so many churches and activities. But we have continued to persevere with our Matthew 25 work. Thank you for all of you who have helped in this push for our church.



As I am writing this column for the newsletter it is February 2, Ground Hog Day. Depending on which Ground Hog you put faith in for their abilities to predict weather you could be happy or sad today. Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow predicting six more weeks of winter, but Concord Charlie did not see his shadow, so he is saying an early spring. I never put much trust in ground hogs as a general rule, but this year I am rooting for Concord Charlie to be right. Some of you may want winter, but I want to start planting garden soon.



There are so many people who keep our church thriving during this period of isolation and not being able to work as normal. Thanks to all of you.

Thanks to Julie and the music every Sunday; thanks to Nima and the broadcast each week; thanks to the liturgist and the soloist each week; thanks for the committees that met and plan and work for worship and education and missions and planning and caring. Thank you for giving and sharing. All of you show that the church is more than just gathering on a Sunday or coming to a meeting. The church is alive and thriving, even in a difficult time. With that said all I have left is: *Happy Valentine's Day.*

All for Now-Ron

## Prayer Concerns

**Natalie Wade, David and Linda Schmidt, the McClintics, Brownie Dunn, Sue Wyman, Becky Hogan, Marie Reynolds, Max Gibson, Margert Hedrick, Charles & Jean Moody, Wilma Reynolds, Mary Elmore, Sue Larson, Jenny McClung, Covid-19 infections, the children and teachers and staff of schools, Our church, and other illnesses and despair and sickness**

Please keep Natalie Wade and her family in your prayers. Send her a note letting her know you are thinking of her. The Address is ...

**Natalie Wade**

**c/o Neta Davis**

**2386 Abington Dr.**

**Charlottesville, VA 22911**

Cards always brighten her day and lift her spirits.



### Session Report for January 10, 2021 by Houston Arbuckle, Clerk of Session

The Session of Clifton Presbyterian Church, Maxwelton, WV, met for the stated January meeting on Sunday January 10, 2021 at 12: 15 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the church. Those in present in the Fellowship were moderator, Susan Sharp Campbell; temporary pastor, Ron Miller; session members: Teresa Bostic, Jim Miller, Suzy Meadows, Heather Blake, Heather Gillilan, Houston Arbuckle and Shannon Warren. Session members, Larry Davis and Lynne Bostic were present by Zoom.

Moderator, **Susan Sharp Campbell**, opened the meeting with prayer and declared a quorum. **Houston Arbuckle** was elected for another year as Clerk of Session. The minutes of the December 6, 2020 stated session meeting and the minutes of the December 20, 2020 called meeting were approved.

The financial reports for November 2020 and December 2020 were received:

- For November the General fund took in \$10,339.84 and expensed \$5,706.54 showing an excess income of \$4,633.30. The Memorial fund received \$100.00 from Park donations and \$30.00 for Poinsettias. The fund paid out \$65.00 to leave a balance of \$46,569. The Cents-Ability offering for November was \$66.50. Stone Soup fund received \$75.00 and now has a balance of \$1,664.34.
- For December the General fund took in \$7,326.78 and expensed \$5,211.47 showing an excess income of \$2,115.31. The Memorial fund received \$1,286.93. Of that, \$925.00 was from Helping Hands, \$165 for poinsettias. It paid out \$65.00 for the Park, \$177.00 to Greenbrier Cut Flowers and \$2,000 for a broadcast system in the sanctuary to leave a balance of \$45,633.30. The Cents-Ability offering for November was \$52.26 and the Joy Gift offering was \$50.00. Stone Soup fund now has a balance of \$1,664.35.

The Clerk reported the average worship attendance for December was **15** and the average number of Facebook viewers was **182** and there

were 156 viewers for the Christmas Eve Service. The Clerk reported for the record, the death of our loved member, **Helen House Fleming** on December 28, 2020.

The Session approved the Sessional Committees and their chairs for 2021. A description of the duties of each committee and its chair is reported in this "Messenger".

The session **renewed their Covenant Agreement with Rev. Miller** until January 31, 2022. The salary is \$2,000.00 per month with vacation and study leave as required by the Presbytery.

Houston Arbuckle reported for the **Communication and Outreach Committee** that the Committee, as approved by the session purchased broadcasting equipment recommended by Mr. Sharp from John Darren McGuffin which included a Newtek Tricaster TCXD300, 2JVC Gze100 Camcorder, 2 Aluminum Camera Tripods, a 5 port Ethernet switch, a HD-SDI Video Stream Encoder, 300 ft of Ethernet Cable, 50 ft RG6 Coax Cable, plus labor needed to set up the equipment for a cost of \$2,000 from the "undesignated Memorial Fund". We still need to amplify the auto signal to the camcorder and become more familiar with the system; however we hope to be using it soon.

Suzy Meadows Chair of the **Christian Education Committee** pointed out that at this time in person classes for children is still not a good idea. She offered some possible alternatives for home study which were approved by the session.

Suzy Meadows also reported for the **Matthew 25 Committee** that the Matthew 25 team (Bream, Clifton and Dunbar) had a Zoom meeting on January 5th. They discussed the Geraldine Buckley event held in December. They are considering a couple ideas for January/February involve MLK Day, Black History Month and dismantling structural racism. The team will work on picking a book for a Zoom book group (for Lenten season?) and also looking to have a couple speakers to give a Zoom talk with these themes in mind.

**(Con't. on page 7-Session)**

# Happenings from Matthew 25 Group



## A Matthew 25 Book Study Discussion

A Zoom book discussion will be held on Sunday, March 14 at 4pm to talk about "Have a Little Faith" by Mitch Albom. I suggested the chosen book because I have previously read and enjoyed it very much. Here's a paragraph from the Amazon description:

*Moving between their worlds, Christian and Jewish, African American and white, impoverished and well-to-do, Albom observes how these very different men employ faith similarly in fighting for survival: the older, suburban rabbi embracing it as death approaches; the younger, inner-city pastor relying on it to keep himself and his church afloat.*

It is hoped that you will join our church and others on the Zoom discussion. This will be a joint activity with Bream, Clifton and Dunbar, the Matthew 25 churches of the Presbytery of WV.

*(Check with Suzy Meadows about reading a copy of the book)*

## Matthew 25 Celebrates Black History Month

*Presbyterian Matthew 25 Churches*

*Bream, Clifton and Dunbar First Presbyterian*

**CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

You are invited to hear reflections and experiences of:

**\*JOAN BROWNING:** Georgia native and one of the original Freedom Riders

Free lance & film writer, lecturer and consultant  
2000 WV MLK Holiday Growing & Living the Dream Award Recipient

***On Friday, February 12 @ & PM***

And

**\*HENRY PICKENS:** An African American Male  
Perspective of Life in the US

Retired Military Veteran of 20 years (including Vietnam)

& Retired from Kanawha County Library

Henry attends Dunbar 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church

***On Friday, February 19, @ 7 PM***

**Both presentations can be found on ZOOM  
ZOOM info to be announced**



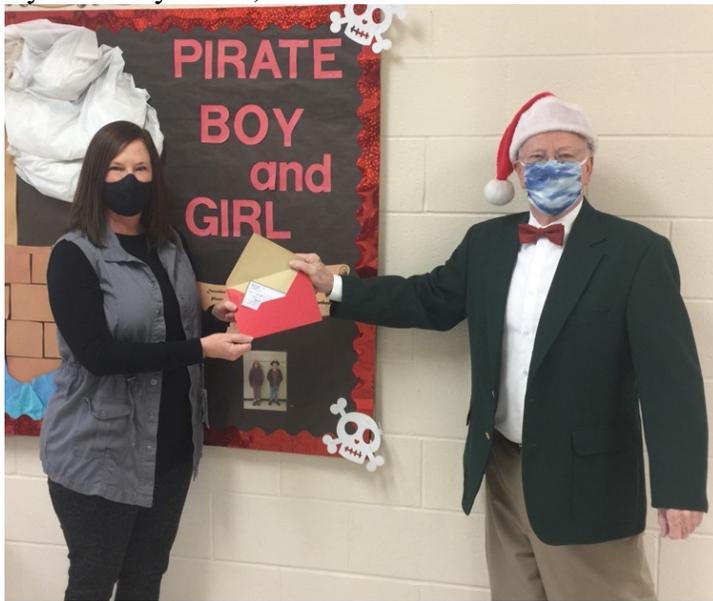
## **REMEMBER WHEN:**

February 16, 2020 is the Sunday that we kicked-off our Matthew 25 celebration. There was a nice crowd at the church for support of the start of this event (just weeks before the pandemic), and there was a wonderful Valentine Celebration in the Church Fellowship Hall after church as part of the start of this Matthew 25 direction.

While the world changed in a few short months, or Matthew 25 work continued. Thanks for being a part of the effort.

# Helping Hands Christmas Project Gets a Big Helping Hand From Clifton Congregation

By Dr. Larry Davis, Mission Committee Chair



(Linda King and Larry Davis)

Shown above is Linda King, Frankford Elementary School principal and daughter-in-law to Jim and Jean King' son. She is receiving a Helping Hands check for \$400 from Larry Davis.

In her own words, "The staff of Frankford Elementary is very appreciative of Clifton's Helping Hands donation. This is certainly an unprecedented time and student needs are at an all-time high. Families have been affected by COVID-19 in many different ways. The funds donated by Clifton Presbyterian Church will go a long way to help purchase clothing, food, and school supplies for those in need."

The generosity of many people during this traditional Christmas project was so great in 2020 that the contribution to each of the three elementary schools was \$100 more than it was for the last two years. The other two schools are Crichton and Lewisburg Elementary Schools.

(Side note: The pirate motif for the photo is derived from the occupation of the Frankford School mascot. Larry's mask was made by his neighbor, Lin Preston.)



By Theresa Bostic, Executive Director  
Shepherd's Center Greenbrier Valley

Shepherd's Center of Greenbrier Valley is still 'Zooming' forward in 2021. We are offering opportunities for people to connect online since we are not able to gather in person. One of our new programs is 'COFFEE TALK' where we join in a chat online about various topics led by one of our board members. This is a fun way to get to know others a little better and meet new friends! We also have speakers during 'Coffee Talk' and a discussion following. Stephen Baldwin was our presenter last week giving an update on COVID in our state and county plus what is coming up in our legislature. Cathey Sawyer from Greenbrier Valley Theater is speaking to our group on February 4<sup>th</sup> about a new play she is writing and the latest from GVT and what they are doing during the pandemic. Come join us and have a cup of coffee with friends!

'BOOK GROUP' is an ongoing program that everyone really enjoys! It is not your typical group where everyone reads the same book and discusses it. The participants share what books they have been reading and give a little synopsis. It is a wonderful way to find new books and authors! We usually have 25 or so participants and you can share or not – it is fun to listen as well! Think about joining us!

These two programs are alternating Thursdays throughout the month. During February, 'Coffee Talk' will be on February 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, with 'Book Group' will be on February 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Both are on ZOOM at 10:00 AM and an invitation can be found on our Face Book page. If you have any questions, please call our Shepherd's Center office at 304-645-4196 or email us at [greenbriershepherdscenter@gmail.com](mailto:greenbriershepherdscenter@gmail.com).

We are having our Adventures in Learning virtually this upcoming session. Classes will begin on March 18<sup>th</sup> – brochures will be going out as well as posts on our website and Face Book page. Join us!

# Meet A Church Family

(Developed by Lynne Bostic of Congregational Care Committee)

**This Month:**

## The Ralph & Valerie Warren Family



(l to r: Bryar, Heather, Caleb, Ashton, Valerie, Shannon, Chub, and McKenna.)

About 51 years ago Ralph (Chub) Warren and Valerie as recent newly-weds were trying to decide which church they were going to attend. Valerie attended Frankford Presbyterian and Chub attended Old Stone Church. Both being of stubborn nature finally came to a compromise and joined Clifton Presbyterian Church and have never regretted the decision.

You probably only know Chub and I as Easter and Christmas faces, but our children and grandchildren have remained faithful attendees, Heather, McKenna, and Ashton Gillilan and Shannon Warren. We are very proud of them serving the church. We also have a son, Bryar Warren and grandson Caleb. Chub is a farmer for War-Lew Farm as well as an auctioneer and broker with Warren's Auction and Real Estate along with Shannon as his "boss".

Since our everyday lives are not that exciting, I will answer these questions as a reference

**What brought your family to this area?**

&

**Where else have you or your family lived?**

We have always lived in this area except for a couple of college years in Morgantown. After Chub

graduated WVU we came back and settled on the family farm to raise our family.

**What is your family's favorite food?**

There are not many foods we do not like (it's kinda evident), but being a beef farmer, steak is high on the list.

**Where does your family like to vacation?**

We women like to vacation at the beach but Chub not so much. One of the few times we got him to go we had to find a stock sale in Myrtle Beach to keep him content. His few vacation trips always had a cow at the end of the road.

**What is your favorite family tradition?**

Christmas dinner with all of the extended family, in-laws, Outlaws, and friends is one of the family traditions that we look forward to every year. I never thought I would say we had Christmas outdoors in WV, but this year we did, and everyone stayed well. Our annual apple butter making is also a favorite tradition with food galore and a lot of tasters "strongly debating" on how many more spices to put in the kettle.

**What are your pets?**

Being a typical farm we have fields full of cattle, a couple of donkeys, 3 dogs and 1 cat.

**Special family Information**

Our grandson Caleb is very musical singing and playing the guitar. The rest of us not so much. The grandkids roll their eyes and ask me to hush when I try to sing.

**What movie depicts our family?**

Well it is definitely not the Walton's, so you can just use your imagination on this one. LOL

**Parting Thoughts**

Through the years at Clifton we have met so many sweet people, a lot have passed on but always in our memories. If your children or grandchildren ever want to pet a cow or donkey, just bring them to the farm.



- March 28-Palm Sunday
- April 1-Maundy Thursday
- April 2-Good Friday
- April 4-Easter Sunday
- May 9-Mother's Day
- May 23-Pentecost

## Scouts Meet at Church



**Left to Right:** Mason Miller, Senator Stephen Baldwin, Ben Kelso, **Andrew Blake**, and Tate McMillion  
(Sent from Heather Blake iPhone)

On January 27, Pack 122 Webelos II Cub Scouts met at the church to work toward “Building a Better World” activity requirement. They were joined by W.Va. State Senator Stephen Baldwin, who discussed citizenship and the role of government, and he led the Scouts through a mock legislative session. Masks were required and social distancing was practiced. **Ryan Blake** is the den leader.

The scouts appreciate being able to use the church!



### *A Merry Christmas Wish*

Early in December **Linda Murchison** mailed a Christmas card to the church in buying a Poinsettia and wishing all a Merry Christmas. Her Poinsettia was in Honor of All of the Folks at the Clifton Presbyterian Church. The card mailed early December was not received until the last week of January. We are sorry to have missed her wishes to the church for Christmas, but we certainly will give those wishes for this New Year ahead.

Linda is living in Delaware near her family at this time, but she is still a part of each of us here at this church. Her presence is missed by the groups where she served and by her participation in the life of this church. Thank you Linda for the gift, and we appreciate you in thinking of your friends at this church for this holiday. Please keep us in your prayers and thoughts throughout 2021 as we keep you in ours. Thank you for the Poinsettia.

## Feb. 2

Ground Hog Day

## Feb. 7

Cents-ability Sunday

Souper Bowl Sunday

Session Meeting

## Feb. 14

Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday

Valentine’s Day

## Feb. 17

Ash Wednesday

## Feb. 21

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent

## Feb. 28

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent

Worship Committee Mtg.

(con’t from pg. 3--Session Report)

Heather Blake, Chair of the **Worship Committee** announced that the Worship Committee planned to continue to meet on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Larry Davis, Chair of the **Mission Committee** reported the Helping Hands donations were extraordinary this year. By adding our church’s part of the Peace Global Witness offering and about \$121 from the Mission Committee budget, we could send **\$400** to **each** of the following schools: **Lewisburg Elementary, Frankford Elementary and Crichton Elementary** for student’s needs.

Lynne Bostic, Chair of the **Congregational Care Committee** announced that her committee has devolved a “Let’s get to know our church family” form to use for newsletter information.

**The Fellowship Committee**, chaired by **Heather Gillilan and Shannon Warren** recommended to have a “Souper Bowl” offering and having the offering go to the Clifton’s Stone Soup fund. The session approved.

In **NEW BUSINESS** Larry Davis was elected to be commissioner to the next presbytery meeting—February 20, 2021—Zoom meeting.

The next regular session meeting was set for **February 7, 2021** at 12:00. Ron Miller adjourned the meeting with the prayer.

# 2021 Clifton Committees

GET INVOLVED!



## Clifton's 2021 Committees

How can God use your time and talents in this time and place? Perhaps it is by become part of one of the many church committees. The session depends on the church's committees for leadership and service as we try to serve our Lord in this community. If you feel called to help in any of these areas, contact the committee chair or in this time of being isolated, contact the clerk of session, Houston Arbuckle, phone: 304 645-6597; [rharbuckle@suddenlink.net](mailto:rharbuckle@suddenlink.net), and the committee chair will contact you.

**Administration Committee** is responsible for church-staff relations, personnel evaluations, and for maintaining the operation of the church office, as well as assisting the bookkeeper with collecting, counting, and disturbing the church's money, including acknowledging gifts to the memorial fund. The committee will recommend both a church treasurer and someone to conduct the annual audit. This committee will serve as a forum to listen to any grievance by the members or the staff or the congregation. Chair: **Teresa Bostic**

**The Property Committee** is responsible for the maintenance, repair and use of the church's facilities, vehicles and grounds. Chair: **Jim Miller**

**The Christian Education Committee** will oversee and support educational opportunities and programs for all members of the church. This committee is responsible for securing and training leadership, as well as procuring appropriate curriculum and necessary supplies for all educational activities of the church. The Christian Education Committee is thus responsible for the Sunday church school; non-Sunday educational activities; Vacation Bible School; youth groups; the nursery, including proper staff and equipment; and maintaining the church library. Chair: **Suzy Meadows**

**Congregational Care Committee** has the goal of seeing that the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of each member, especially those who are home-bound, infirm, or with special needs is met to best of our church's ability. Effective communication is essential in seeing that no one goes "unnoticed". The duties of this committee may include: noting persons absent from worship for extended periods, sharing information in the newsletter, informing the pastor and session of those in need of care, establishing visitation programs,

updating a church's directory, and assisting in coordinating the church's response in situations of crisis for members. Chair: **Lynne Bostic**

**The Fellowship Committee** provides fellowship opportunities and events which bring church members and guest together in order to strengthen our relationship with each other and with God. This includes fellowship time, dinners, parties, retreats and picnics in the park.

Chair: **Heather Gillilan and Shannon Warren**

**Mission Committee** is charged with the task of developing and supporting local and global mission projects. Chair: **Dr. Larry Davis**

**Communication and Outreach Committee** strives to communicate with the congregation and the surrounding community. The committee oversees the website, Facebook, informational brochures, the church newsletter, publicity for special events and other special communicates directed by the session. The committee shall also note persons visiting at worship, informing the pastor and helping with follow-up contacts. Chair:

**Houston Arbuckle and Shannon Warren**

**The Worship Committee** shall oversee the worship opportunities for the congregation. This committee is to make provisions for both Sunday and special worship services as well as encouraging generous giving as part of worship in response to God's grace. Its duties include recommending special offerings, preparing the sacraments, ensuring that the music program is complete, scheduling elders for communion, and maintaining sanctuary continuity. The committee also oversees wedding and funerals. Chair: **Heather Blake**

**Crossroads Committee** shall engage in various activities to assist in answering the question, "*What is God's will for us as a church and a community.*" This shall include: evaluating the needs of our church and our community; planning strategies to meet these needs; exploring shared ministry with area churches; developing programs to assist members as they strive to live out a richer and fuller life of biblical stewardship; and evaluating options for pastoral leadership. Chair: **Houston Arbuckle and Shannon Warren**





## Flowers for the Church

The Worship committee in their meeting in January wishes to present to the church the possibilities of having fresh flowers at times in the Sanctuary for the Worship Services. It

was recommended that the Worship Committee provide fresh flowers at certain times, but that we also encourage others to donate flowers for the Altar Table at various time of the year as they may so desire. Contact **Heather Blake**, Worship Committee chair, about scheduling a time that you might want to donate flowers. Maybe it would be in honor of a special birthday; maybe it would be in memory of someone; maybe it could be a certain time on the calendar.

## The Season of Lent

*40 Days of Preparation*

As stated in the story on Page 1 concerning the beginning of the Lenten Season with Ash Wednesday, the date for the first Sunday of Lent will be the 21<sup>st</sup> of February. Lent is a time of repentance and mourning as we contemplate the death of our Christ on the cross for each of us.

Traditionally during the period of Lent people forgo some activity or habit to be able to meditate more clearly the Christ. Too often we “give up things” that are just not things that important to us or they are things we should reconsider doing any way. Maybe we just need to do some things for Lent. Maybe we need to sacrifice something that really means something to us, and in doing so we remember. Maybe we need to look at our attitudes toward our neighbors or our enemies or our friends and families. Maybe we need to take a time to focus on the Christ in our lives.

This year in order to help us in our Lenten Journey you may receive a devotional piece if you so desire edited and organized by Ron Miller. It will be a thought for each day with a scripture and prayer. You may receive a copy at the church, or you may have one sent to you if you so desire. While this is nothing spectacular, maybe it will be a help in focusing on the Lent Season. These will be available by Ash Wednesday. Please let Ron know as soon as possible if you desire a copy.

## Super Souper Day Sunday



On Sunday, February 7 the church will once again collect our Souper Bowl Day of Caring Offering. This year the offering will go to help with continue support of the Stone Soup Fund. Dr. Larry Davis refers to this offering this year as the Souplless Bowl Day of Caring as we are not going to have a soup luncheon after church due to the pandemic. We can use the offering funds though to help. Pick your favorite team and contribute to this special offering. While your NFL favorite team may not be the team in the Super Bowl, you can still support this need by donating in the name of that team if you wish. Let’s help make a difference while still having a good time.

## Worship with Us— In-Person or On-line





**Next Issue March 2021**

**Mar. 5-World Day of Prayer**

**Mar. 7-Daylight Saving Time Begins  
Session Meeting**

**Mar. 17-St. Patrick's Day**

**Mar. 20-First Day of Spring**

**Mar. 28-Palm Sunday**

*See you at the Church (or On-line)*



**Clifton Presbyterian Church  
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