

The Week of July 6, 2025

THE KISKI WEEKLY



From the Desk of Rev. Erin Kobs, Transitional General Presbyter

Friends,

My heart continues to be with our siblings in the Texas Hill Country, as they continue the search, rescue & recovery process following Friday's catastrophic flood. As of Tuesday afternoon, 107 people have lost their lives. There are still a number of folks who are unaccounted for, including five campers & one counselor from Camp Mystic. Listening to the stories of people who survived & the stories about the young girls who lost their lives just rip your heart wide open. It is just unimaginable what happened along the Guadalupe River. I am reminded of the first line of the song "It's Quiet Uptown" from the musical Hamilton - "There are moments that the words don't reach. There is suffering too terrible to name. You hold your child as tight as you can & push away the unimaginable." (Thanks to Jan Edminson, Charlotte Presbytery EP for the reminder of this song). Honestly, there really are no words to describe the devastation & the aftermath of the destructive waters. A fellow clergy woman, Charlie, is a board certified trauma counselor who happens to live in Kerrville, TX. She & her husband Andy, the assistant city manager in Kerrville & first responder, have been out in the community since the early hours on Friday. Charlie is stationed with the families from Camp Mystic who are awaiting word on their children. She shared with our clergy group that the stories truly are unimaginable & some of the hardest things she's ever heard in her work. I am grateful for people like Charlie & Andy, & all the volunteers & first responders who are on the ground - searching for folks, clearing tons of debris left behind, & offering love to those left in the wake of the floodwaters.

How can we help? First of all, pray. Keep praying. While it might not seem like much, our prayers make such a difference. Second, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has set up a specific fund for the Texas Hill Country Floods. You can donate [here](#). Third, there will likely be opportunities in the future to give of your time & energy on the ground for the long term recovery process. As those opportunities arise, we will be sure to share them with you all.

Blessings,

Called Presbytery Gathering

The Presbytery of Kiskiminetas will meet for a Called Presbytery Gathering on **Saturday, July 19th** at First Presbyterian Church, Clarion.

The purpose is to receive the candidates for the two presbyter positions & to vote on their packages, as well as their installation commission.

There will be a meet & greet beginning at 9:00am to meet with the candidates. The meeting portion of the gathering will commence at 11:00am.

The meeting is hybrid.

Registration closes on Thursday, July 17th at noon.

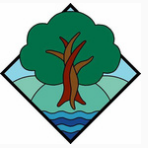
[Register Here](#)



Kiski Presbytery
Synod of the Trinity

Clerk of Session Corner

Here is important information for clerks of session of our congregations



2025-2027 Book of Order & Presbyterian Planning Calendars

The new Book of Order (goes into effect on July 2, 2025) & Presbyterian Planning Calendars are now available.

Cost: \$10.00 each for Book of Order & \$12.00 each for calendars.

If you did not participate in the pre-order, you can still purchase them through the PCUSA Store.

If you would like a PDF copy of the Book of Order, [click here](#).

PA Annual Report

Beginning in 2025, churches will need to complete an Annual Report with the state of Pennsylvania in order to maintain their non-profit status & tax-exempt status. **Filing after June 30th, there will be a fee.** Continued non-compliance could result in your church falling out of "good standing" or even administrative dissolution by the state.

- Churches need to update their contact information & report on who their corporate officers are for their "Corporation" (i.e. president, secretary & treasurer)
- The corporate officers must be properly elected by the session (unicameral board) or Trustees (bicameral board) & documented in your minutes. If your church has not elected officers recently, you need to begin the process & duly elect them before filing the Annual Report.

How do you update your information?

- Log into the website [Business Services | An Official Pennsylvania Government Website](#)
- Fill out the necessary information. [A step by step guide for filing the report](#)

Insurance Reimbursement Fund

Does your church have Guide One Insurance?

The Presbytery has a fund to help reimburse your deductible when you have an insurance claim. This is not just claims from storm damage. If you have a claim, you can send in your information regarding your claim for the Presbytery to review. The reimbursement will be for \$500.00.

For more information, please contact the Presbytery office.

Session Record Review

If you have not had your records reviewed, please contact Erin to schedule a date to have them reviewed.

Information about Records

If you need record keeping supplies, check out [Cokesbury](#). They carry the archival paper & additional covers for your church register & session minute books.

The [Presbyterian Historical Society](#) in Philadelphia is where you can send your church records to be stored in their archival vault. This is important to do with your older records. In compliance with the Book of Order (G.3.0107), official records of active congregations and other records of permanent value, including registers; minutes of session, trustees, and other church groups; charters and property records; publications; and photographs. You can contact them at (215) 627-1852 or email refdesk@history.pcusa.org.

PA Sales Tax Exception Certificates

By now, you should have received your church's new sales tax exception certificate, please contact the Presbytery office. We will make sure to get it to you.



Upcoming Events Around Kiski

- **Apollo Community VBS**, Holy Holidays! is from July 7th-10th (5:45-8:15pm) at Boiling Springs Presbyterian Church.
- Grace is holding their **VBS - Discovering Jesus** from July 14th-18th (1:00pm-2:25pm). Join us for the treasure hunt of a lifetime! Games, songs, & bible lessons. Contact the church to sign up at 724-548-5609
- Dayton Glade Run is holding an **18 Hole Golf Scramble** on July 19th at White Oak Golf Course in Dayton. You can register teams of 4 members. Tee time is 10:00am. Registration is \$260/team (before June 30th) & \$280/team after that date. Register by contacting Sheila Wadding at sdwadding@windstream.net.
- Arcadia will be holding a **Bazaar & Bake Sale** on July 26th from 9:00am to noon. There is something for everyone. Hot dogs, chips, and beverages will be available for purchase as well. Physical Address: 248 Arcadia Road, Arcadia PA.

Being Neighbors

This is a new column to offer resources to other congregations or to ask for needs for your congregation!

- Are you in need of a **Music Box** to provide music for your worship services? This product was talked about at our November Presbyter Gathering by Joel Kinnard, member of the Congregation & Pastor Formation Commission. We have donations to purchase music boxes for congregations in need. Please contact Joel for more information (jrkinnard57@icloud.com).
- **Wilcox** is looking for a set of paraments for their communion table. If you have a set that you wish to donate, please contact Rachel Kreig, clerk of session (rachelkreig@hotmail.com)

Good News Board

**Have some good news to share?
Email us at statedclerk@kiskipby.org**

- **Mt. Zion** had a great rummage sale this spring. They made \$3,359.05 over the course of three days. Their pies were a great success as well! They want to thank everyone from around the Presbytery who came.
- **Trinity** is in the planning stages of a two day trip to the Ark Encounter & Creation Museum in Kentucky. They want to open it to anyone in the Presbytery who are interested. Please talk with Bonnie Davis for more information or email Trinity Church (clarksburgtrinitypres.org)

2025 Stated Presbytery Gatherings

Saturday, September 13th, 10:00am, Slate Lick Presbyterian
Saturday, November 1st, 10:00am, United Presbyterian, Blairsville

Presbytery Wide Mission Project

This summer, we are going to be collecting supplies for 3rd & 4th grade classrooms in the Presbytery. We are encouraging as many churches who want to participate to do so. Supplies can be dropped off at to the Presbytery Office or you can bring them to the July 19th Called Presbytery Gathering. The collection will continue until August 7th. If your church wishes to make a monetary gift, Concord Presbyterian, Dayton will purchase supplies & pack the kits. You can make the check out to the Presbytery & we will ensure the funds are used for this. Contact Joel Kinnard for more information.

Supply needs for 1 kit:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 12 ct. colored pencils | 6 unsharpened pencils (rubber banded together) |
| two pocket folder | inexpensive corded earbuds |
| glue stick | 70 page wide ruled spiral bound notebook |
| blunt tip scissors (unpackaged) | handheld pencil sharpener (unpackaged) |
| large eraser | 24 ct. crayons |
- 12x14 or 14x17 lightweight canvas or cloth bag with handles (solid color or kid-friendly fabric, no logos)
Optional: handmade or store bought pencil pouch





Mandated Reporter Trainings

A reminder that the Book of Order does require that elders, ministers, & volunteers (Sunday school teachers, VBS workers, anyone who is working directly with children) every **36 months** (G-3.0106). This is a change from the past, when it was every 5 years, which is still the requirement for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Mandated Reporter training takes about an hour & a half. There is the option to do Zoom for these. The Zoom link will be emailed to all registered participants on **the day of the training**.

If your church is interested in hosting a Mandated Reporter Training, please contact Erin Kobs, Transitional General Presbyter & Stated Clerk

Wee Kirk Conference

The annual Wee Kirk, a small church conference, will be held on October 13th-15th at Laurelville Retreat Center in Mount Pleasant. The purpose is to inspire, equip, motivate & encourage small churches of any denomination & to provide rest & refreshment for the clergy & lay leaders like you! There will be a variety of workshops, opportunities for networking & conversations, & a chance to peruse the Hearts & Minds Bookstore. Registration for churches with up to 150 members is \$200.00 per person. If you register before August, it is \$175.00! There are brochures at the Presbytery office or you can go [online](#) for more information & to register.

Birthdays

Pastors with July birthdays:

- July 2nd: Ed Rudiger (Sligo); Bobbi Torrance (At Large)
- July 5th: Dick Cassel (retired)
- July 6th: Dan Little (retired)
- July 25th: Emily Koehler (Beechwoods & Sugar Hill)

QuickBooks

Your church use QuickBooks? Are you concerned with the rate increase? Feel free to contact Kimberly Warner, bookkeeper, at the Presbytery Office to talk about your options!

Presbyterian Women Upcoming Events

July 23rd, 10:00 am - All Women's Picnic at Sharp's Campground, North Ridge Road, Shelocta, PA. Bring a dish to share & enjoy fun, music, laughs & sistership with women throughout the Presbytery. Beverages & table service provided.

Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering will be Wednesday, October 22 (10:00 am) at Ebenezer Presbyterian Church, 5720 Newport Road, Clarksburg, PA 15725. Our theme for the day will be from Deuteronomy 14:2 "...for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession." If you have never been to a Gathering, it is filled with love, worship, music, & more SISTERSHIP!" Light morning refreshments & lunch will be served. A \$5 cost will be collected at the door.

Mark Your Calendars!

Listening to God, Especially When We Don't Wanna

Workshop with Rev. Dr. Graham Standish
Saturday, October 11th, 9:00am to 2:00pm
Dayton Glade Run Presbyterian Church

We live in a world of too much information, conflicting beliefs, and changing values. Meanwhile the very places that ground us, our churches, are declining. How do we discover and do what God wants, especially if it may not be what we want? This retreat will give us the spiritual skills and perspectives to help us:

- Pay attention to God's presence so we experience God in our churches and life
- Listen for God's clear voice in a noisy culture, especially with out church's future
- Let go of what we want to follow what God wants for our churches and our lives
- Let go of fears, guilt, shame, doubts, control, and more so that we can do God's will above all in our lives and our churches.



Presbytery Directory

Need to access the Directory? [Click here](#)
The directory is under password. If you need the password, call Cheryl at the office

Need Something? Call Us!

Have a question? Need some information about an upcoming event? Looking for a particular resource?

If you are in the need of something, please call us here at the Presbytery Office. We will make sure that you are put in touch with the correct person to answer your questions - whether it is the Formation Commission, the Organization Commission, or our two Presbyters (Training Presbyter or Organizational Presbyter/Stated Clerk). We are here to help & want to make sure that you are getting the correct information.

Update from Syria & Lebanon Partnership

It has been an increasingly difficult time for our brothers and sisters in Syria and Lebanon. While the U.S. attacks on the Iranian nuclear program have intensified security and economic concerns, closer to home, Syrians are now facing the fallout of a suicide bombing and shooting attack by an ISIS affiliate on the Mar Elias Greek Orthodox church in Dweila, a suburb of Damascus, that killed 25 worshipers and wounded 63 others. While several NESSL (National Evangelical Synod of Syria & Lebanon) pastors have expressed deep concern as to how these attacks will impact their congregations, churches in the immediate area are working to respond and to provide greater security measures from the government when congregations gather for worship and other activities and request more effective protection from the government. Some are considering the installation of metal detectors for all church events.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read a statement about the attack on the Mar Elias Church from the Supreme Council of Evangelical Community in Syria and Lebanon from Rev. Joseph Kassab, the Council President and General Secretary of NESSL. [See additional statements in response to this attack on the SLPN website.](#)

Several ministers from the new government of Syria have visited the church and expressed concern while the top Sunni cleric, the Grand Mufti, condemned the attack. More recently, the new government arrested a number of individuals suspected of playing a role in the attack, a departure from its passive response to other acts of violence against civilians, calling them “overreaches” by individuals, thereby refusing to take responsibility. The immediate response from the international community, including the United States, has been to condemn the attack and to show concern for the fate of minorities under the new government.

Our sources say the churches have raised again their concerns over the series of “overreaches,” labeled by the government as individual behavior and isolated incidents for which the government has refused to take responsibility. This has occurred so many times, the churches’ fear is that these isolated incidents have been transformed into “institutionalized systematic practices against Christian communities.” They have reportedly called for the government to break its silence against such attacks because it impacts the dignity of all Christians in the country. Other voices are admitting that bringing the entire country together, with its many diverse groups, under one umbrella of a united Syria will take time.

Statistics show that before the war there were approximately one million Christians in Syria and that now there are fewer than 300,000 due to emigration and flight. The new government is walking a tightrope between the international community’s demands for human rights and the demands of the Islamists that brought it to power.

Deep fear and uncertainty continue to grip our partners and churches in Syria and neighboring Lebanon. We ask your prayers for all of our NESSL churches and the entire region as events unfold

Clearances



- **Mandated Reporter Training** (Child Abuse Prevention) - all ministers, elders, deacons & volunteers who work with children. Certificates are good for 36 months.
- **Boundary Training** - all ministers & elders. Must be done every 36 months (according to the Book of Order)
- **FBI Fingerprint Clearance** - all ministers. Certificates are good for five years (in accordance with PA state law & Presbytery policy)
- **PA State Police Clearance** - all ministers & those who work directly with children. Clearance is good for five years (PA state law), but are highly recommended to be done every 3 years for protection of our churches.