

THE KISKI WEEKLY



From the Desk of Rev. Erin Kobs, Organizational Presbyter & Stated Clerk

Friends,

As I am writing this, I'm trying to digest the news coming out of Minneapolis this morning of another mass shooting at a school. It happened at Annunciation Catholic Church & the shooting occurred during the opening morning mass of the new school year. At this point, there are two young children, an 8 & 10 year old, dead, as well as 14 children were injured being treated at local hospitals. A local priest heard what happened & ran to the unification center to comfort the families. Children were terrified & in shock, families were heartbroken & scared for their kids, teachers doing the best they could to offer comfort & support until the students could be reunited with their families.

My heart is absolutely broken for these children, families, & school community. My prayers are with them, along with the first responders & health care workers who are caring for the injured. The mayor of Minneapolis said in his initial remarks, "These kids were literally praying." They were praying. I just cannot even begin to imagine - it brings me to the floor. The trauma of these kinds of events is unfathomable. They will be dealing with the trauma & fallout for a very long time. Senseless acts of violence are simply not what God intends for us as humanity, especially events that occur within the sacred space of a sanctuary. It can make us afraid.

I want to share this prayer from the ELCA resource, All Creation Sings, that a colleague shared this afternoon.

Gracious God, the news of this day has ripped our hearts & torn our souls.

We are walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

In the depths of pain & anger, we gather before you.

O God, our rock & our refuge. You are our only comfort. You are our only hope.

Merciful God, you know the depth of our suffering.

We have only begun to mourn those we've lost. Uphold all those who love them, we pray.

Faithful God, surround us with your everlasting arms.

Hear our cries of despair, heed our calls for justice, & do not let us lose hope.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, we pray. Amen.

In this Issue

Page 2: September Stated Gathering, Upcoming Presbytery Events, Course for Clergy, Note from Angela

Page 3: Advent Resources

Page 4: Events around Kiski, Good News Board, Being Neighbors, Rwanda Partnership Sunday

Page 5: Mandated Reporting, Clearances, Birthdays, Wee Kirk

Page 6: Clerk of Session Corner

Page 8: October 11th Workshop with Graham Standish flyer

Looking for past issues of Kiski Weekly?

[Click here](#)

Presbytery Upcoming Events

August 27th - September 27th: Angela in Tennessee
(available via phone/email)

September 2nd - 4th: Erin at Synod of the Trinity Mid
Council Leader Gathering, Bedford, PA

September 13th: 10:00am Stated Gathering at Slate Lick

October 11th: 9am-2pm Workshop with Graham Standish
at Dayton Glade Run - [Register Here](#)

October 25th: 11:00am Installation Service for Rev. Erin
Kobs & Rev. Dr. Angela Cowser at Ebenezer

November 1st: 10:00am Stated Gathering at United
Presbyterian, Blairsville

NEW: Trauma Informed Care & Leadership Course

Angela is going to be offering a four session course for all **current clergy & commissioned pastors** on trauma informed care & leadership. It will be hybrid at the office & on Zoom. The dates are September 29, October 1, 6 & 8 - all sessions from 6:00-9:00pm. The books will be provided & this course is eligible for continuing education, as long as all four classes are attended. The two books are *Unspeakable: Preaching & Trauma-Informed Theology* (Sarah Travis) & *Trauma Informed Pastoral Care: How to Respond When Things Fall Apart* (Karen McClintock)

Registration closes on Wednesday, September 10th.
[Register here.](#)

Listening to God, Even When We Don't Wanna

On Saturday, October 11th, we are hosting a workshop with Rev. Dr. Graham Standish on discerning & listening to God's call for our lives & for our churches. This is a great opportunity to learn some vital skills & perspective! The workshop is from 9:00am-2:00pm at Dayton Glade Run Presbyterian Church. There will be a catered lunch provided & the whole day is being offered to anyone in the Presbytery free of charge. On the last page of this issue is a flyer with more information. [Register here.](#)

September Stated Gathering



The Presbytery of Kiskiminetas will meet for a Stated Gathering on **Saturday, September 13th** at 10:00am at Slate Lick United Presbyterian Church & via Zoom technology.

All pastors & clerks of session have received the call letter in their email or via mail.

[Register Here](#)

Registration will close on Thursday, September 11th at noon.

The packet & Zoom link will be sent to all those registered on Thursday, September 11th after noon when registration closes.

We will be holding workshops in the afternoon that have been requested from folks in the Presbytery. The workshops will be offered in person only & they are open to anyone in the Presbytery who might be interested.

- Elder Communion Training - this is for elders to be trained to lead communion in their home churches; open to those who need re-certification & those who are new.
- Treasurer Training - for treasurers, new & seasoned, who need some additional training & information about best practices, current Quickbooks software, etc.
- Book of Order Training (BOOT) - this is for anyone interested & curious about the Book of Order, led by our OP & Stated Clerk. There will be prizes available...

Church World Service Collections

CWS cleanup buckets, school kits, backpacks, health kits, and period packs can be dropped off at Plum Creek Church on Tuesdays in September 1:00-3:00 p.m. or by appointment. They will be picking up items on October 16. The CWS center in New Windsor, MD will be closing at the end of 2025. CWS is planning to open a super depot somewhere in Pennsylvania for next year's dropoffs. Churches received a packet earlier this year & information is available on the CWS website.



Advent 2025 Materials Pre-Order

Advent is coming! If your church is looking for devotionals or other materials for this upcoming Advent season, Creative Communications for the Parish has released their 2025 catalog. As in year's past, the presbytery office will do a bulk pre-order to lower the overall cost for our participating churches. **The deadline to place an order is Tuesday, September 30th.** Please email Cheryl (programmanager@kiskipby, org) with your selections.

Here are some of the recommended choices:

- **A Grand Miracle**, inspiration from C.S. Lewis (adult) - beloved Christian author C.S. Lewis described Christ's birth as a "grand miracle". We invite you to encounter that miracle this season, as if for the first time, with these deeply reflective & thoughtful resources that highlight the extraordinary, life-altering gift God gives us through his Son, Jesus.
 - Daily Advent Devotions (\$1.99 each)
 - 2025 Advent Calendar (\$10.50 for 50 pack)
 - Advent Litanies (\$19.50 for 50 pack)
 - Christmas Bookmark (\$5.25 for 25 pack)
- **Our Dear Christ Enters In**, a Worship Series for Advent (family/adult) - what if our goal this Advent was to simply let our dear Christ enter into our homes & into our lives? How does his entry into the world speak into & even change our approaches to this season? In this special series for Advent, we look at what happens when Christ enters in & makes our hearts his home.
 - Complete Worship Series (prayers, sermon, children's sermon, bulletin announcements, music & text of each service, & PowerPoint - \$39.00)
 - Advent Devotional (\$1.99 each)
 - Service for Christmas Eve (\$29.00)
 - Biblical Bookmark (\$14.00 for 50 pack)
 - 4 Session Bible Study (\$7.99 for student book; \$8.99 for leader guide)
- **From Heaven Above**, a 4 Session Bible Study - participants explore the biblical backgrounds of the gifts of hope, love, peace, & life that come from heaven above through our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ.

Study & discussion questions, prayers & reflections help us see that we can share gifts that Jesus to let others know about the birth of the greatest gift of all. (\$39.00)

- **A Season of Peace**, Advent Devotions for Seniors - our lives should be full of peace, even in our later years. The devotions for older adults in this large-print edition highlight the message of having peace in the Lord always. (\$1.99 each)
- **Waiting in Wonder** (family) - Advent is filled with anticipation & wonder & sometimes, a little impatience! Encourage families to gather with open eyes, ears & hearts these Advent days, for they hold precious opportunities to learn more about the promises of God & the surprises that come from the joy of the Lord.
 - Advent Devotions for Families (\$1.99 each)
 - Advent Table Tent (\$0.79 each)
 - Advent & Christmas Placemats (\$12.50 for 50 pack)
- **Look Around the Stable** (children) - Advent is a time for getting ready! Learn how God prepared the perfect setting for Jesus' arrival in a Bethlehem stable with these eye-opening resources that help children get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday each year, to prepare a place in their hearts for him today & to ready us all for the day when Christ will come again.
 - Advent Devotions for kids (\$1.99 each)
 - Advent Chain (\$1.29 each)
 - Children's Messages for Advent & Christmas (5 messages & reproducible coloring sheets & activities for each week; \$14.99 each)

A Sanctified Art Advent Series

A Sanctified Art has their new Advent series out entitled What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent. Their series include liturgy, music suggestions, devotions, Advent calendars for adults & children, full service for Sunday after Christmas, intergenerational art curriculum, sermon planning guide & more. [Click here](#) for the downloadable infographic. The series will be launching later this month.



Upcoming Events Around Kiski

- Shelocta is holding their **2025 Golf Scramble** on Saturday, September 6th. If you wish to participate as a foursome, you can contact the church. You can also purchase a sign in honor or memory of a loved one.
- New Rehoboth Greenville is hosting **“Digging Deeper” Bible Study** on Monday, September 8th at 7:00 PM.
- New Rehoboth Greenville is having a **Drive Thru Dinner** on Sunday, September 14th.
- New Rehoboth Greenville is holding **Three Evenings of Miracles with Randy Stear** on October 14th - 16th at 6:30pm. Discussion, food, fun & fellowship. Invite your neighbors & friends!
- 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)

Being Neighbors

- Are you in need of a **Music Box** to provide music for your worship services? We are **seeking donations** to purchase music boxes for congregations in need. Please contact Joel for more information (jrkinnard57@icloud.com).
- There are several items available from the **Coolspring Church** - communion table, large coffee pot & some children’s ministry items.
- **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)
- **St. Benedict** has a communion table that is free to anyone who needs it. The dimensions are 22x45x30 & it is in good conditions. Call Allan Hicks at 814-418-1966.



Good News Board

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

- **Washington’s** Paul LaVan (5 years old) took first place in the kid’s pedal tractor pull at the Indiana Fair; they also blessed 8 backpacks in worship.
- **Cherry Tree** has sponsored a Community Vacation Bible School for 65 years. This summer, they had 28 children & 10 adults participated in Community VBS.
- **Heilwood** has a free food distribution once a month. In August, they gave away 50 bags.
- **Concord Dayton** along with the Presbytery were able to put together 122 school kits for grades 1-3 at Shannock Valley Elementary School.
- **Trinity** put together 60 school kits for students at River Valley Elementary in Blairsville.
- **Atwood** donated anti-bacterial wipes, kleenax, toothpaste, toothbrushes, & deodorant to Dayton, Shannock Valley, & Elderton Elementary Schools.
- **Shelocta** is putting together hygiene kits for kids & received a gift from Rotary to do the Power Pak program.

Rwanda Partnership Sunday

Our Rwanda Partnership Sunday is coming up on Sunday, September 21st. The liturgy will celebrate the occasion, which is the beginning of the lead up to our celebration of our 20th year of partnership in 2026. It is linked [here](#) on our website.

Email Scam Alert

We have been alerted by several church administrators that there is an email scam making the rounds again.

They are asking for copies of your church directory. It will say it is from your clerk of session. The email address being used is salvationandgrace222@gmail.com.

DO NOT EMAIL THEM BACK! This will cause emails to go out to your congregation & potentially they could be victims of scams for gift cards, money, etc.



2025 Stated Presbytery Gatherings

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

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.

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.

Birthdays

Pastors with August birthdays:

- August 4: Jay Montgomery (Retired)
- August 5: Elizabeth Arter (Specialized)
- August 13: John Manon (United, Blairsville)
- August 24: Gary Lyon (Retired)
- August 25: Lea Austin (Retired)
- August 30: David Crapnell (At Large)



Presbyterian Women Upcoming Events

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.

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.



Presbytery Directory

Need to access the Directory? [Click here](#)

The directory is under password. If you need the password, call Cheryl at the office

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 (Effective July 4, 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.

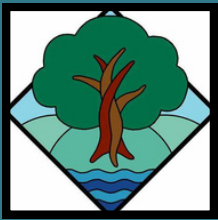
Information about Records

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.



LISTENING TO GOD EVEN WHEN WE DON'T WANNA

Rev. Dr. Graham Standish, Samaritan Counseling Center

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?

Saturday, October 11th
9:00am - 2:00pm

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 our 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.



[Register Here](#)



Dayton Glade Run Presbyterian
2540 Dayton-Smicksburg Road
Dayton, PA 16222