

Lehigh Presbytery News

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610-391-9020 * office@lehighpresbytery.org * <http://lehighpresbytery.org>



May 11, 2016

Kids These Days

Kids these days . . . three words that represents the enigma of humans who have been on the planet somewhere between 6 and 18 years (and depending on the context, even longer). Parents know the volatility of growing up--for kids, time goes by way slower, and so they change, react, play, learn, and live--much faster than we do.

Remember when thirty minutes in the grocery store with your parents was a brutal, horrifying test of survival? My facebook feed is littered with nostalgic posts to the effect of "SHARE THIS IF YOU SURVIVED PLAYING OUTSIDE." Kids these days...they just don't get it. Right?

Kids these days . . . always stuck to their phones, right? Short attention spans. They've all got this new internet language that seems to grow new words/phrases every ten seconds, none of which make any sense (this article is so on fleek). Speaking of the internet--relationships are seemingly now like icebergs--10% above water/in person, 90% below the surface/digital. The amount of ADD and ADHD diagnoses are going up. The National Institute for health reports that in 2014, 1/6 teens 12-18 years old experienced a major depressive episode, defined as symptoms of depression occurring for a solid two-week period. That's a lot.

To top it all off--the pressure is on. College tuition is going up, good jobs are harder to find for post-grads, and our school systems are relying on faceless standardized tests to sort kids into categories at a very trying time in their existence when--guess what!--kids don't all learn the same or develop at the same rate.

So clearly, kids these days are having a tough go of it. Who wouldn't?

I will not tell you that Kirkwood Camp can fix all of that. But I will tell you, with 100% confidence, that Kirkwood has an incredible, potentially life-changing positive impact to bring to kids' lives this summer.

Kids these days crave something real -- Real relationships, real experiences, and real love--for themselves, and from God. Our lives are so busy, so noisy on and offline--we're all over the place.

Camp is real. I'm here, and our staff is here, to engage kids where they're at, to love them for who they are, and to empower them to be who God is calling them to be. We're ready to have fun, we're ready to look stupid, and we're ready to get down to business--the business of God's work, that we love ourselves and our neighbors equally and fully.

Just like kids these days, everybody is trying to figure out young adult millennials--we used to be the kids in the *kids these days*. A lot of us in that category are over-anxious, and unable to handle failure. We're also not really present in the church, and are making up the rising percentage of those people with no religious affiliation, who still say they are "spiritual", whatever that means. Within our own denomination, we're constantly running around with our heads on fire trying to figure out why our churches are getting older and smaller, and why young adults aren't joining, or actively

engaging with the church. I may be just one example--but I am a confident Christian today because of my experiences with at camp.

In December of 2001, I had my first experience with God. There was a trail through a beautiful, quiet pine forest, where the trees grew in rows--it was called "Cathedral Trail". My groups' counselors split up, one at the beginning, and one at the end of the trail, and sent us down the path one by one, with ample time in between that we wouldn't see or hear anyone else during our walk (it was like 200 yards, don't freak out). Alone, the Holy Spirit moved me and changed my life.

That wasn't the only time--I have vivid memories of incredible worship services at camp, special late-night devotions as a counselor, and my first experiences as a director helping God facilitate that experience for everybody in our ministry.

It's only a week, so what? All God needed for me was five minutes. For some of my closest friends, it took an hour at worship, a week outside, a summer at camp on staff. It's an opportunity to change a life, a little wave in the middle of the ocean that pushes a boat ever so slightly, putting it on a trajectory that over thousands of miles will lead to a very different destination. It's a huge investment--a week totally worth it.

Kids these days . . . who do we want them to be? How do we get them there? I'll let you answer those questions, if you can. Please keep in mind--you can't teach life, and you can't teach God. But the safest, super-fun, friendship-building, creativity-highlighting, spirit-seeking, community-creating, young-human-empowering camp around is in Stroudsburg, and we'll be having incredible Spirit-filled, real-life experiences all summer long. I hope your family can join us.

Tommy Campbell
Director, Kirkwood Camp



Summer Camp – Registration is underway



It is that time to think of warmer days and fun in the sun. What better way to have fun than to be outdoors! It is summer camp season and registration is underway.

We offer week-long overnight and day-camps designed to nurture Christ-centered community based on trust, love, and a challenge to personal growth. Campers will meet new friends, play crazy games, and have an unforgettable week.

Open to rising grades 1-12. Visit our website at <http://www.kirkwoodcamp.org/camp.html> to learn about the different camps offered and to register. You can register on-line or by requesting a registration form from the camp.

For parents handbook and forms visit: <http://www.kirkwoodcamp.org/camperpayment.html>

Don't delay.....sign up today!

Kirkwood Camp, 127 Kirkwood Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Phone: 570-421-8625 - Email: Kirkwood@kirkwoodcamp.org
Tommy Campbell, Camp Director



Presbytery Highlights

The Stated Meeting of the Lehigh Presbytery took place on April 26, 2016 at First Presbyterian Church of Allentown. The meeting was opened with prayer by Ruling Elder Jack Felch, Vice Moderator of the Lehigh Presbytery. Rev. Lindsay Harren-Lewis delivered greetings from the First Presbyterian Church of Allentown, shared information about the ministry of the church and presented details to help navigate the church building.



Opening devotions were provided by Rev. Joyce Smothers, First Presbyterian Church of Hokendauqua as we prepared our hearts and minds for the business to come before this meeting.

Treasurer, Marianne Kitzmiller offered a brief Treasurers Report explaining the rationale to transfer the Presbytery's investments from Wells Fargo to Haverford.



Rev. Douglas Portz, our regional representative from the Board of Pensions, shared information on the upcoming changes and a general overview of the benefits plan. This presentation piqued the interest of the commissioners and prompted a question/answer period on the changes coming in 2017. Rev. Portz reported that our Pensions Fund is sound, and there will be no dues increases in the next year. He reminded us that the Joy offering provides assistance for our retired ministers. Everyone who had the opportunity to hear Rev. Portz either at one of the workshops he facilitated or at the Presbytery meeting, were grateful to have been made aware of the new changes.

After discussion, the Presbytery approved waiving the requirement of G-2.0607d for Candidate Noha Khoury to receive a passing grade of 70 (she scored 69) on the PC (USA) Bible Content Exam. Rev. Tim Dooner had provided rationale and explained the Office of General Assembly's change in the process and that only 20% of Seminary Graduates now pass this exam. Rev. Yoder expressed that the Presbytery should communicate to the Examination office that something is wrong with the system. Rev. Dave Duquette suggested that the Presbytery approve a resolution for our GA Commissioners to file at the upcoming General Assembly in June. The Presbytery approved having the Commissioners request that the Bible Content Exam be rigorous and fair.

While the offering was collected for the Second Harvest Food Bank, Greater Berks Food Bank, and the United Way of Hazleton, commissioners enjoyed a musical interlude provided by soloist Lisa Manno, accompanied by Tim Brendler from First Presbyterian Church of Allentown. Rev. Laura Stone, United Presbyterian Church, Slatington received the offering and provided the prayer. Following the blessing a delicious dinner was prepared by members of First Presbyterian Church of Allentown and served by the youth of the church. Gracious thanks were given to the Kitchen staff and servers.

The report of the Committee on Ministry was provided by Chair, Tillie Chase who presented the Teaching Elder Subsidy Grant proposal, providing churches the opportunity to apply for additional funding to support a full time teaching elder. Applications are available through the Presbytery Office. The deadline for the 2016 Grants is May 31, 2016, with Grants being awarded on July 1, 2016.

Rev. Tillie Chase officiated at the Honorably Retired Ceremonies for the Rev. Cynthia Simmons and Rev. Donna Cieply. First Presbyterian Church of Easton member, Tim Cain, shared



Rev. Tillie Chase honorably retires the Rev. Cindy Simmons

gratitude and thanks to Rev. Cynthia Simmons for her ministry and inspiration at First Presbyterian Church of Easton during the past 5 years. They are grateful that she came to them when they needed her most. Prayers and Hugs were shared with members of the Simmons family and members of the church. Rev. Donna Cieply was unable to attend the meeting due to failing health. Rev. Tillie Chase shared information on her background in ministry in the Lehigh Presbytery.



Rev. Sue Marie Baskette

Rev. Tillie Chase, chair of the Committee on Ministry, introduced Rev. Sue Marie Baskette (United Presbyterian Church of Pottsville) and Rev. Joanne Marchetto (The Barn) to share their Faith Statements. The Commissioners approved their membership into Lehigh Presbytery.



Rev. Joanne Marchetto

Rev. David Duquette presented a second reading of the proposed changes to the Standing Rules. The Commissioners voted to approve the changes to the Lehigh Presbytery Standing Rules. He then presented a second reading of the proposed changes to the By-Laws to add the Immunity from Liability and Indemnification clause for the protection of the Presbytery members and staff. The Commissioners voted to approve this change to the By-Laws.

A first reading of the updated amendments to the Gracious Dismissal Policy provided changes to the policy. These changes were presented and explained by Teaching Elder David Duquette. A second reading will take place at the June 28, 2016 Presbytery Meeting at Pennside Presbyterian Church, Reading PA.

A Memorial Tribute to Rev. Dr. Gerhard Grau was shared by Rev. Beth Case, First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem. Rev. Stephen Emick, First Presbyterian Church of Allentown, shared a Memorial Tribute to Rev. Dr. George Landes who passed away in April.

Rev. Ruth Ann Christopher offered the Teaching Elder Tip for this meeting. Sharing how Faith United Presbyterian Church is having Congregation Supply Sundays, a month long collection each quarter to help defray some of the costs of operation. They have collected cleaning supplies for their Custodian who provided a list of his preferred brands. They will be collecting for the Secretary this quarter and the Sunday School during the third quarter. This is a great way to help with your church's budgeting.

Ruling Elder Donald Brown provided an update on the PET (Presbytery Engagement Team) that has been working with the First Presbyterian Church of Reading as they go through the gracious dismissal process of the Lehigh Presbytery. Both the PET and the SCC continue to work together carefully.

Teaching Elder David Duquette provided an update on the PET for First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem. They are moving forward in the discernment process. This process is complex due to the size of the congregation. The church will be conducting their Straw Poll May 13-17 with results shared with the Presbytery, Session and Congregation in early June. The Straw Poll will help determine how the church will move forward.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Rev. Cynthia Simmons, First Presbyterian Church of Easton.

Memorial Tribute to the Rev. Dr. Gerhard Grau

June 18, 1937 - January 23, 2016



If you didn't know by his deep bassist accent, diligent work ethic, his knowledge of Barth's theology and Schleiermacher's higher criticism, Gerhard Grau was a German brick-layer, ordained in the United States, who pursued citizenship here so that he might make a difference in the civil rights movement.

He was a follower of Christ, a bold preacher, a gracious mentor, and...a little bit of a curmudgeon!

One of the thousands of people who benefitted from Gerhard's ministry was an Egyptian Woman, married to US military man, two kiddos in preschool. The husband had abandoned this woman and their children. The children were ready to drop out. An elder in Gerhard's church was also the principal of the school. He came to Gerhard saying, "We must do something for this family!" But Gerhard said that the budget had been completely allocated! Even the benevolence had been spent already. But the elder was insistent.

Session noted the woman was truly in need. She had two children, and no ability to work. And Session said, "We step in, or she's headed back to Egypt." Session made a request to the congregation for funds, and people gave from deep pockets.

When Gerhard saw that the church was willing to support this woman, he asked them to form 3 teams: 1) job; 2) apartment; 3) food & child care. The woman and her children worshipped there for about 2 yrs. But one day, another Elder came to Gerhard with concern, "You're not speaking the Gospel! She's still following the Muslim faith." Gerhard said, "I can't change hearts, but I am praying." Are you? "No," came the answer. Gerhard asked the elder to assemble another team - this time a team of people to pray.

Within two weeks, the woman approached Gerhard and asked how to become a Christian. Gerhard walked her through the Book of Romans, explaining to her the difference between Christianity and other religions. He said, "other religions require humans reach up to God. Christianity is the only religion where God came down to man, to woman to child." The woman said, "That's why you helped me - you were God reaching down to me & family. I want to be in that family." Gerhard said that she prayed there, accepting Christ as Savior & Lord.

Years later that very woman became an elder in that church, and a strong influence for Christ among the Muslim community in DC.

I'd be amiss not to mention Gerhard's beautiful wife Betsey. The fact that they passed within 48 hrs of each other points to the depth of their friendship and spiritual connection. Betsey's teaching benefitted thousands of children and adults across the country. In recent years, she was active at First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem in the ESL program, the Dementia Care-Givers Support Group, and the driving ministry.

Gerhard & Betsey parented two amazing children who've become friends to me over the last three months. The Grau legacy lives on in 4 - almost 5 - grandchildren, one of whom Gerhard baptized in November.

On a recent visit to Gerhard, he bolted upright from his contemplative lazy boy chair with these words, "Beth, I don't want you to pray today." I let my silence hold the question mark. He went on. "Every time you pray, the next thing you do is leave. We've got more to talk about, and I don't want you to leave."

For many of us, Gerhard and Betsey have left to early. But they've left an imprint on me, on us, on the world:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is known for saying, *"we must regard people less in light of what they do or do not do, and more in light of what they suffer."* Bonhoeffer said it. Gerhard & Betsey lived it.

Gerhard lived his life verse, the Word of God through the prophet Micah: *"what is required of you, oh man, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."*

Written by Rev. Beth Case
February 23, 2016

Memorial Tribute to The Rev. Dr. George M. Landes, Sr. August 2, 1928 – April 7, 2016



The Rev. Dr. George M. Landes, Sr., an honorably retired teaching elder and member of Lehigh Presbytery, died at the age of 87 on April 7, 2016.

Near the end of his life the late Steve Jobs said, "Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure — these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart."

I have every reason to believe that George Landes knew this truth long before Steve Jobs discovered it. I had the privilege of preaching at George's funeral here at First Presbyterian Church of Allentown 10 days ago. In speaking with Carol, George's wife of 62 ½ years, in preparation to preach at his funeral; in getting to know George over the years since he retired in 1995 from Union Theological Seminary in New York City as Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Cognate Languages after a distinguished 39 year career; in experiencing him in his role as a Parish Associate at this church continuing his ministry of preaching and teaching well into retirement; it was more than obvious that George lived every day following his heart. He had a heart for languages, scripture, teaching, opening his mind and others to learn. He had a heart for his students and the church. And most of all, George had a heart full of love for his family - for Carol; for their children George Jr., Peggy and Chris; and for his three grandchildren - George III, Tanner, and Kate. George spent his life following those things that God had placed on his heart to be the most important things in his life.

George was a brilliant man. He was a graduate of the University of Missouri and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa; he graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago; was a doctoral student under the esteemed Professor W. F. Albright at Johns Hopkins University where he received his Ph. D in Old Testament and Semitic Studies. He was quickly wooed to join the faculty at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Throughout his career he published and lectured, he led archaeological digs in the Middle East, his first Hebrew book, "Building Your Biblical Hebrew Vocabulary," first published by the Society of Biblical Literature in 1961, remains number 3 on the Society's top ten best titles of all time. If you were to open a New Revised Standard Version of the

Bible and turn to the preface, you would discover that George was one of the world renowned scholars invited to serve on the committee to publish that Bible in 1989. George was a scholar, a seminary professor, a mentor and friend to many.

If you knew anything about George, you knew that he was the personification of grace. Just think how intimidating it could have been for those of us on the pastoral staff here to prepare to preach on a Sunday, especially from an Old Testament text, knowing that a Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Cognate Languages would be sitting in the pews. Oh it could have been intimidating, but it never was because that was not who George was. He did not use his scholarship to intimidate. He offered it up with plenty of grace to lead others to learn what is truly important. For George, what was truly important was the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God for the life and witness of our brother, George Miller Landes, Sr.

Written by Rev. Stephen Emick
April 2016



Upcoming Speakers at the 2016 Meetings at Lehigh Presbytery

As Lehigh Presbytery looks at creating an atmosphere for cultivating leadership skills among Pastors, Elders, and Congregational Leaders we are pleased to present these educational opportunities. Plan now to join us. (All are welcome to attend.)

- June 28, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.** **Stated Meeting** of Lehigh Presbytery at the Pennside Presbyterian Church, 253 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA.
Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley, Ministry Relations Office of the Presbyterian Foundation *will provide tips and techniques for Stewardship Education.*
- Sept. 27, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.** **Stated Meeting** of Lehigh Presbytery at the College Hill Presbyterian Church, 501 Brodhead Street, Easton, PA.
Rev. Ruth Faith Santana-Grace, Executive Presbyter of Philadelphia Presbytery will speak on *“Engaging in the Wilderness of Mid-Council Wanderings –the challenges, temptations, and opportunities of the journey and a new land.”*
- Nov. 15, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.** **Stated Meeting** of Lehigh Presbytery at the Community Presbyterian Church, 1755 S. Delaware Drive, Mt. Bethel, PA.
Worship Celebration and Speaker for Princeton Theological Seminary.
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Boundary Training



This training is sponsored by Lehigh Presbytery and is open to all persons in the Presbytery, especially those for whom Lehigh Presbytery has oversight according to the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

This year's training will be led by Stephen R. Treat, DMin, LMFT. He is an in demand speaker and have been featured on numerous media programs. He has co-authored two books.

The cost for the training is \$20.00 and includes lunch. You have two opportunities to complete this training this year. Choose one of the following:

Monday, June 13, 2016 – 9 a.m.- 3p.m. at the Presbyterian Church of East Stroudsburg, 55 Smith Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301 (Registration Deadline June 1, 2016)

Monday, October 10, 2016 – 9a.m.–3p.m. at the Pennside Presbyterian Church, 253 N. 25th Street, Reading, PA 19606 (Registration Deadline September 30, 2016)

Please register through Lehigh Presbytery (610-391-9020, office@lehighpresbytery.org).

Session Minute Reading



It is time for the Annual Reading of the Church Session Minutes. Clerks of Session are required to have their Minutes examined and Rolls/Registers reviewed during the month of May. So as not to conflict with Mother's Day weekend, I have scheduled four opportunities for you to attend. Please feel free to attend the **one** that is most convenient for you. Thank you to those who so graciously accepted my request to host.

1. **Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 10 a.m. – 12 noon** – The Presbyterian Church of East Stroudsburg, 55 Smith Street, East Stroudsburg, PA.
2. **Saturday, May 14, 2016 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.** – Hope of Christ Presbyterian Church, 44 West White Street, Summit Hill, PA.
3. **Saturday, May 21, 2016 from 10 a.m. – 12 noon** – Faith Presbyterian Church, 3002 N. Second Street, Emmaus, PA.
4. **Saturday, May 21, 2016 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.** – College Hill Presbyterian Church, 501 Brodhead Street, Easton, PA.

Please bring with you your current copy of the *Book of Order*.

Our method of review involves reading each other's Minutes while following a Session Minutes Examination Checklist (copy enclosed). For good stewardship of your time, **please fill these forms out in advance of our meeting and bring the copies to our meeting.**

As we asked last year, please bring the following documents **if you did not do so previously.**

1. Property deed(s)
2. **2015** Annual Report
3. Most recent directory
4. Current bylaws and standing rules
5. Current Sexual Misconduct Policy (G-3.0106)

We hope that all Clerks can be present. Moderators of Session are welcome to attend and participate, but their attendance is not mandatory. Many find this time helpful in their ministry as Moderator of Session.



Work Day At Camp Kirkwood
Saturday, May 14, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Help is needed to get the camp ready for the summer youth to enjoy their weeks at camp. There are jobs for all skill levels.

Many hands lighten the work load. Tasks will include cleaning the cabins and buildings, outdoor clean up (raking, weeding, mulching, etc.), setting up tents, sanding, painting and more.

Join us on Saturday, May 14th!

Camp Kirkwood, 127 Kirkwood Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-421-8625 + kirkwood@kirkwoodcamp.org



Korean Street Bazaar
Sunday, May 22, 2016
1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

The Korean Church of the Lehigh Valley will be hosting a **Korean Street Bazaar**. Come join them for a day of fun and good food. There will be.....

- **Korean Food:** kimchi, ramen, kimbob, sweet potato chip, veggi fry, Korean pizza, corn dog, fried dumpling, fish cake, dduk bok gi; and for desert Korean ice caki, bbung ti gi, gang neng i; Drinks include seeke, boricha, coffee, and water.
- **Crafts:** origami, Korean hand fan, Korean flag, blank doll
- **Korean Games:** yutnori, gongi nori, tuho nori, badut
- **Photo booth:** take pictures with Korean Groom and Bride.
- **Music:** Gangnam Style & K-Pop
- **Raffle:** buy raffles-win prizes

Bring your family and friends. We look forward to seeing you on May 22nd for a fun filled day!

Korean Church of the Lehigh Valley
1987 Schadt Avenue, Whitehall, PA 18052
610-799-1987





Scottish Communion Service

The First Presbyterian Church and College Hill Presbyterian Church of Easton will hold a joint Scottish Communion Service at **4:30 p.m.** on **Sunday, May 22, 2016** in the Sanctuary of the First Presbyterian Church, 333 Spring Garden Street, Easton, PA. All are welcome to attend.

“SIMPLE GIFTS”



The **First Presbyterian Church of Hokendauqua** will be hosting the folk music duo **SIMPLE GIFTS** at their worship service on **Sunday, June 5, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.** Their choir will be joining this group for their anthem “*O Mary Don’t You Weep*” that morning. All are invited to attend.

Simple Gifts is a nationally acclaimed group and you can read more about them on their website www.simplegiftsmusic.com.

First Presbyterian Church of Hokendauqua, 3005 S. Front Street, Whitehall, PA 18052
610-264-9693 email: hokeypres@gmail.com

PW REGIONAL GATHERING

JUNE 3-4, 2016

FRIDAY, JUNE 3 FROM 5 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4 FROM 9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.



The Presbyteries of Donegal, Lackawanna, Lehigh and Philadelphia will hold a Presbyterian Women’s Gathering on **June 3-4, 2016**.

Join them for a time of fellowship and spiritual nourishment. This gathering is being hosted by **Highland Presbyterian Church, 500 E. Roseville Road, Lancaster PA.**

Cost: \$75.00 (due by May 3, 2016) includes gathering & meals. To register please send your check (made out to the PW-Synod of the Trinity) and mail with your registration form to: Ellie Grove, 815 Kylemore Way, York, PA 17402.

Lodging is on your own and accommodations in the area are the Best Western Eden Resort (717-569-6444), Days Inn & Suites (717-293-8400), or Fairfield Inn & Suites (717-581-1800)

Registration forms can be found at the Presbytery office or by contacting Nora Harford (Lehigh PW Moderator) at nmharford@gmail.com.

Report submitted to assembly on identity, purpose of PC (USA)



A vibrant family portrait of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has emerged from the recent church-wide conversation on the identity and purpose of the denomination, and God, Christ, love, and the world are among the most prominent subjects.

Dominant, too, is a commitment to Reformed Theology, and to the scriptural call to ministry outside the church. That's the message coming from "[When We Gather at the Table: A PC\(USA\) Snapshot](#) (PDF)," a report of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) to the 222nd General Assembly (2016).

It outlines the results of the comprehensive effort made by COGA in late 2015 to dialogue with the church about who it is and what it is called to be. COGA, with the help of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Research Services office, invited anyone who wished to complete an online form with open-ended questions and to engage in group gatherings to talk about the PC(USA) in this current time and place. More than 3,000 Presbyterians responded and some 21,000 pieces of data came in.

"The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly wants to thank everyone who gave thought, prayer, and insight to Research Services," COGA said in its report. "It was clear in all responses that all people care about their Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). If our church was only fueled by passion there is enough to carry us well into the future."

COGA's report is available on PC-Biz and will be part of the business received by the General Assembly when it meets June 18–25 in Portland, Oregon. The data collected by Research Services is available [in a report here](#), and an external report written by Dr. John Brueggemann [can be found here](#).

"We are a blessed and fortunate people who have a heritage that still inspires us to be hearers and doers of the Word; to treasure the role of laity and clergy together; that privileges thoughtful discernment and compels us to act for justice," COGA said. "There is a widespread appreciation for Reformed Theology and how it has shaped us a church."

Simultaneously, "There is an urgent sense that our efforts must now address the needs of congregations, mid councils, and agencies of the church—venerable and emerging, as an expression of faithfulness to the Lordship of Christ," the committee said. "COGA notes a healthy restiveness to reform our structures and perhaps even our Presbyterian culture in service to a renewed vitality of witness in our nation and around the world. There is a common desire to find ways to support healthy congregations and our commitment to helping others."

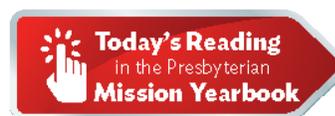
COGA's report will first be received by the Assembly Committee on The Way Forward before moving on to the full assembly.

*Office of the General Assembly
Toya Richards
Director of Communications and Assistant Stated Clerk*

2016 Presbyterian Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study

The 120 year old *Presbyterian Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* has transformed to a new digital-only resource. By offering this as a free resource through our website, we are able to broaden its reach, share inspiring content in a timelier manner, and demonstrate better stewardship.

Click the link to read the daily Mission Yearbook article.



What has Heath Rada, moderator of the 221st General Assembly, heard?



Join us on **May 26 at 7pm ET for a LIVE 90-minute webinar** with Heath Rada as he reviews what he's heard at the listening sessions he held across the denomination.

Rada will give his full report to the General Assembly in June. This webinar is an opportunity to hear a preview from him in addition to hearing some information from the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly survey and the NEXT Church survey.

The *Presbyterian Outlook* is offering this webinar at no charge so that as many Presbyterians as possible may participate in this time of discernment in the life of the PC(USA).

Click here to register <http://pres-outlook.org/2016/05/conversation-heath-rada/>

Heath Rada will present for 45 minutes and then there will be 45 minutes for questions and answers. All are welcome. Commissioners and delegates to the 222nd GA are encouraged to attend.

There is no cost to register, but please consider **making a donation to the *Presbyterian Outlook***.

Presbyterian Outlook
1 N. 5th St., Suite 500, Richmond, VA 23219

PC(USA) survey report: Tell us your thoughts!

In the fall of 2015, the Office of the General Assembly conducted a survey to gather opinions about the PC(USA). A record number of Presbyterians responded - 3,427 to be exact. Our reporter, Leslie Scanlon, summarizes the results here: **[Shared identity: New report highlights themes and priorities identified in denominational listening effort.](#)**



Have you read the results of this listening effort? If so, what do you think? What stood out the most to you about the report on the COGA church-wide survey? Tell us in 100 words or less and email it to info@pres-outlook.org by May 13.

<http://pres-outlook.org/2016/05/shared-identity-new-report-highlights-themes-priorities-identified-denominational-listening-effort/>



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER
ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

In an effort to provide easier access to updated information on disaster response and recovery, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has created a special web page that contains disaster response resources.

It is called a quiet page because the URL for this page is not published.

The address of the web page is <http://pda.pcusa.org/page/midcouncil-epda/>



Support Outreach at Pathways Housing Services By Donating Laundry Items



Each week, individuals and families come to **Pathways Housing Services** seeking help in stabilizing their living situation.

Caseworkers have recently received a number of requests for assistance with laundry services. **To fulfill these needs, the Lehigh Conference of Churches is seeking donations of laundry detergent (single-use pods are preferred) as well as laundry bags.**

Funds designated to cover the cost of visits to the laundromat would also be greatly appreciated. Would you consider reaching out to those in our community who struggle to make ends meet?

Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator **Laura Rowe** at 610-433-6421 ext. 6101 for more information or to arrange a drop off. With your help and generosity, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of those in need.

The Lehigh Conference of Churches | 610-433-6421 | 610-439-8039

[Email](#) | [Website](#)

New Live Simply Resources are Available Now

Live Simply, based on Philippians 4:11, is the theme for just-released resources published by the Ecumenical Stewardship Center. Use [Giving magazine volume 18](#), Live Simply [theme materials](#), and the digital [Companion Resource](#) to create your congregational stewardship emphasis. Magazine writers include Adam Hamilton, Shane Claiborne, and Nathan Dungan. [More](#)

Peruse all of ESC resources <https://stewardshipresources.org/resources>



Davidson Clergy Center – 2016 Clergy Programs

The Davidson Centre for the Professions and Davidson Clergy Center is **now taking reservations for ministers and church professionals for the upcoming 2016 Clergy Programs**, held in their new office space in Davidson, NC. The new space is conveniently located off I-77 in North Carolina on Lake Davidson, with peaceful walking trails and contemplative lake-front areas. The Program is a five-day intensive session, focusing on resilience and self-care, and serving clergy and church professionals in times of transition, sabbatical, personal stress, and for ongoing career wellness. Please see our website for more information, www.davcp.com.

The Board of Pensions has graciously assisted ministers with partial tuition through their Assistance Program, and PDA has also sponsored ministers who have experienced trauma through natural or man-made disasters. Please call us if you have recommendations for pastors in your Presbytery, and we will be happy to give you more information. We have served many of your ministers in the past ten years, and we look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve your clergy through The Clergy Program of Davidson Clergy Center. Program dates: **July 18-22; August 1-5; August 22-26; September 12-16**

We wish to thank the Congregations of Lehigh Presbytery

Thank you for your efforts to spread the word about how our **One Great Hour of Sharing** (OGHS) offerings are making a positive difference for our **neighbors in need** through the three OGHS-supported programs (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People).



Also, you probably know that the Presbyterian Church (USA) **Pentecost Offering** supports **youth ministries, Children at Risk, and Young Adult Volunteers**, and that **your congregation can keep up to 40%** of this offering for youth ministries in your area. Although the Pentecost Offering can be received at any time throughout the year, most congregations receive it on **Pentecost Sunday or sometime during the season of Pentecost**.

Here's a great, **2-minute video** about **Triennium** and **Young Adult Volunteers**, which are two of the wonderful faith and leadership development opportunities funded by the Pentecost Offering:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3T2K3BGaUDM>

Ideas for promoting the Pentecost Offering (PO):

- Minute for Mission
- Verbal announcements
- Bulletin inserts
- Articles and/or pictures of PO-funded projects in bulletins
- Articles and/or pictures of PO-funded projects in newsletter/e-news
- Invite members from PO-funded programs to speak
- Invite members from PO-funded programs to attend fellowship time and/or a meal
- Visit PO-funded projects
- Wear T-shirt from PO-funded projects
- Matching gifts (e.g., by Mission Team, Session, Deacons, Trustees, families, individuals)
- Dedicate PO during worship
- Sermon
- Displays
- Envelopes
- Children's sermon
- Posters

Can I be of **further assistance** to you? If so, please contact me at 1-610-391-8210 or karehad@diakon.org

Thank you and may God continue to bless and guide you and your ministry.

Grace and peace,
Rev. Dianne Kareha
PC(USA) Special Offerings Leader Support Network



Luther Crest Hosts Panel Discussion

The public is cordially invited to attend a panel discussion on the topic

"Does God Exist? Either Way, How Do We Know?"

at **2:30 p.m.** on **Tuesday, May 17, 2016**, in **Crest Hall of Luther Crest, 800 Hausman Road, Allentown, PA 18104**.

For more information, please contact Rev. Dianne Kareha, Diakon Chaplain for Luther Crest (610-391-8210, email karehad@diakon.org)