

PEAKS POSTINGS

NOVEMBER 17, 2020



The Presbytery Office invites all churches to send in your Holiday Service Schedule for online services. We will make the list available at the beginning of December.

Change of Mailing Address



The Presbytery of the Peaks is now receiving mail at a post office box.

Please note the change for your records.

Presbytery of the Peaks

PO Box 2519

Forest, VA 24551

A yellow sticky note with a green circular fastener at the top left corner. The text "MEETING REMINDER" is written on it in blue and black.

MEETING
REMINDER

November 19th Presbytery Meeting

Begins at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom

To register, [click here](#).

- Registration will open at 8:30 a.m.
- The Examinations Committee asks that all registrants watch the sermon from Jen Brothers before the meeting. The link is posted on the Presbytery Meeting Information page.
- Special guest speak: Diane Moffett (more info on p.4)



Dear Peaks Presbytery Community,

With the news about promising vaccinations, I am urging vigilance on the part of Peaks Presbyterians in the meantime. As winter approaches the impulse to move inside is strong. But the risks are increasing right now, not diminishing. We are most at risk when people gather indoors, for periods longer than 15 minutes at a time, with people interacting in close proximity, which is exactly what the church does in ordinary circumstances.

When and where to worship remains a session's decision. In the past, I've advised sessions to be sensitive to their pastors and church musicians whose discomfort with the risks may be stronger than their own. Recently, I've observed that congregations are deeply reluctant to turn people away who show up on a Sunday without masks; I've also observed masks slipping from nose to lip to chin in the course of a worship service. I am concerned that safe practices are becoming lax at a time when we need to be more careful.

If you worship indoors, please be vigilant about safe practices: handwashing, properly worn masks, and maintaining physical distances of 6 feet or more. Don't gather around food. Greet each other from a distance. And as hard as it is, don't linger after worship.

We are no less the church of Jesus Christ if for a season we need to play it safe – worshipping outdoors, in parking lots, via FM transmitter, Facebook live or YouTube or Zoom or whatever technological platform works best for you. Be in touch with Dave Baker, our communications director, if you need ideas that might work for you. Please continue to do what it takes to glorify God in a way that doesn't jeopardize people's health.

Loud singing and loud speaking amplify the spread of aerosols. Quiet speaking and singing are less risky. It is also true that the risks even of soft singing are amplified by the number of people singing together. Keep your masks on, but whisper sing. Better to sing at a safer whisper than to belt out your favorite hymns along with a sickening virus.

Jesus said to the woman at the well,

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

We can do that faithfully even in the midst of a pandemic. We've been doing so adaptively since Easter of 2020.

Blessings,

Carl Utley, General Presbyter



All Public and Private In-Person Gatherings

(Virginia's Most Recent Order Regarding Religious Gatherings Mandated 11/13/20)

Individuals may attend religious services **of more than 25 people** subject to the following requirements:

1. Individuals attending religious services must be at least six feet apart when seated and must practice proper physical distancing at all times. Family members, as defined below, may be seated together.
2. Mark seating and common areas where attendees may congregate in six-foot increments to maintain physical distancing between persons who are not Family members.
3. Any items used to distribute food or beverages must be disposable, used only once and discarded.
4. Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently-contacted surfaces must be conducted prior to and following any religious service.
5. Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted to participate in the religious service.
6. Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding physical distancing, gatherings, options for high risk individuals, and staying home if sick.
7. Individuals attending religious services must wear cloth face coverings in accordance with **Amended** Executive Order 63, Order of Public Health Emergency Five.
8. If religious services cannot be conducted in compliance with the above requirements, they must not be held in-person.

More Presbytery Meeting information

1. Please listen to the sermon of Jennifer Brothers, candidate for ordination, before the Presbytery Meeting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6HPSCes6Dg>

2. First Time Commissioner Training Video

<https://youtu.be/22eA6lpZCxQ>



The next South Sudan Church partnership discussion on Zoom will be November 18th at 3 pm

We will continue working with the International Partnership Manual: “Called as Partners, Serving Together in God’s Mission”. For questions and the Zoom link please email Sandy Whitt (sandrarcpc@yahoo.com).

Do you know of an outreach ministry that could use hymnals?

Northminster Presbyterian Church has hymnals to give away. They have 103 red hymnals (The Hymnbook), 103 blue hymnals (The Presbyterian Hymnal) and a 12 volume set of The Interpreters Bible. Call the church office at 366-8115 between 9:00 am and noon if you are interested.



Mission Agency Exec. Director to Inspire Presbytery

The Mission Committee is pleased that the Rev. Diane Givens Moffett, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, will speak to our presbytery meeting on November 19. The Rev. Moffett is the head of the mission arm of the PC(USA) and will highlight the **Matthew 25 Invitation** and answer questions.

Diane Moffett speaks with clarity and energy about how our congregations of all sizes can gain resources and energy to strengthen our congregational relationships and create a renewed commitment to “serve the least of these” in our community and around the world.

With timely help from Matthew 25 resources your congregation can choose one or more of the following emphases: Building congregational vitality; Dismantling structural racism; or Eradicating systemic poverty.

To learn more, just visit www.presbyteriansmission.org/ministries/matthew-25 and see if your congregation is being called to be a Matthew 25 congregation.

For those not participating in the Zoom presbytery meeting, Diane's presentation, along with the entire meeting, can be viewed live on the Presbytery of the Peaks Facebook page.



PRESBYTERY CALENDAR

Date	Time	Event	Location
11/18/20	2:00 p.m.	CP Workgroup	Zoom
11/19/20	9:00 a.m.	Presbytery Meeting	Zoom

Next Presbytery Meeting:

November 19, 2020

Zoom

[On-Line Calendar](#)

Peaks Postings is published each week on Tuesday. Please submit news, events, or prayer requests **by noon on Mondays** to Julie Burnett at julie@peakspresbytery.org for inclusion in the following issue.

Guidelines for announcements or news items to be featured in Peaks Postings:

- Keep the information to one page or less.
- Use links to web sites rather than including lots of details.
- Please obtain permission from the people pictured in your photos before submitting them to *Peaks Postings*.

Peaks Postings Editors reserve the right to

- feature or not feature an article. Our first priority is to feature activities within POP churches and the Presbytery.
- edit submitted articles/announcements.
- limit the number of weeks an article/announcement is featured.

Past issues of Peaks Postings are archived for about six months on our website, [Presbytery of the Peaks](#).

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“Building partnerships in Christ, to empower communities of faith to be the
Body of Christ for the world.”