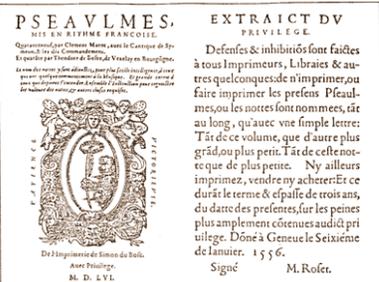


First
Presbyterian
Church
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns -Online.

Music Notes for this week.

The opening hymn this week will be *Our Help Is in the Name of God*. The text is a fairly recent paraphrase of Psalm 124 by Martin Tel, the C. F. Seabrook Director of Music at Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey. Tel also served as senior editor of *Psalms for All Seasons: A Complete Psalter for Worship* (2012), which includes the text for this week's opening hymn. The modern text is coupled with an ancient tune, first published in the Genevan Psalter, supervised by John Calvin to participation in worship.



Defenses & inhibitions font faites à tous Imprimeurs, Libraires & autres quelconques de n'imprimer, ou faire imprimer les prefaces Pfeaulmes, ou les notes font nommees, tât au long, qu'avec vne simple lettre: Tât de ce volume, que d'autre plus grâd, ou plus petit: Tât de ce note que de plus peute. Ny ailleurs imprimez, vendre ny acheter: Et ce durât le terme & espace de trois ans, du date des presentes, sur les peines plus amplement cōtenues audict pri uilege. Dōné à Geneue le Seixieme de Ianuier. 1556.
Signé M. Rofer.

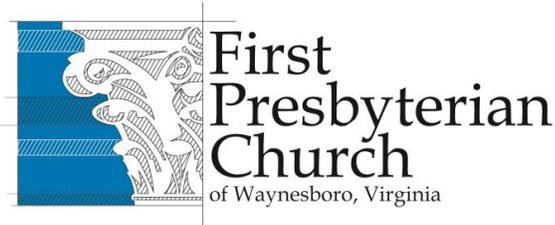


Tel.



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Sorry about the postponement of the discussion Sunday. The good news is, the tests indicate I don't have Covid; the bad news is I'm still recovering from the bug I did contract. We will reschedule the luncheon as soon as possible.

Dear Fellow Community Member,

Over the past two weeks, the number of people in our community who have COVID-19 has grown to a level similar to the peak we experienced last December. The COVID-19 inpatient census at Augusta Health is about 30% higher than it was at our highest point in January. As we monitor the progression of the disease in our community through multiple modeling techniques, all indications are that our COVID-19 inpatient census will continue to rise through the end of September to mid-October. As you can imagine, this creates a tremendous challenge and level of stress for the staff. Since the pandemic began, sadly, 215 members of our community have died from COVID-19. During the past four weeks, 23 people have died, and in the past week, 11 people have died.

In order for Augusta Health to continue to effectively provide care for our community, we are appealing to everyone in the Staunton, Augusta County, and Waynesboro area who is qualified to receive a COVID-19 vaccine **to get their vaccination as soon as possible**. Our community's low vaccination rate of 53% has resulted in an extremely high rate of COVID-19 locally, putting severe strain on Augusta Health personnel and resources. *85% of the COVID-19 patients at Augusta Health are unvaccinated.*

- We estimate the SAW community prevalence is at 1,200 COVID-19 patients, which is consistent with the highest number since the pandemic began. While we experienced similar prevalence in December 2020, the Delta variant is proving to be deadlier and much more easily spread. While data varies from day to day, the projected peak of this surge is projected for the end of September to mid-October.
- Community testing positivity rates are an important indicator of the amount of COVID-19 within a community. Johns Hopkins has stated that a testing positivity rate greater than 5% is cause for concern. In May, the WHO stated that communities should not relax quarantine measures until testing positivity rates are below 5% for two consecutive weeks. **The SAW testing positivity rate is presently at 31%—the highest rate our community has ever experienced.** Everyone should be aware of this number and use it to guide decisions concerning masking and attendance in crowded public spaces.
- We opened a monoclonal antibody infusion clinic Monday, September 20, 2021, for COVID-19 positive patients in the community for patients who are early symptomatic, not hospitalized, and who qualify according to the CDC criteria.
- Augusta Health is presently at near capacity and operating under “Red Surge” conditions, which means non-urgent and non-emergent procedures have been halted so staff can be redeployed to provide care for our hospitalized patients. Spaces have also been repurposed. Because we are operating at maximum capacity, we are working to coordinate care with health systems across the Commonwealth who are not experiencing such high prevalence rates.
- Just like other health care providers, we have applied for state and federal resources to augment our critical care staffing. As of now, we have no information on whether these requests will be fulfilled. Without relief from federal or state clinical resources, it may be necessary for Augusta Health to transfer patients to other health systems in the Commonwealth if projections prove correct and hospitalizations continue to rise.

For information on how to schedule a COVID-19 vaccination, call 540-332-5122 (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon. through Fri.), or by visiting the Augusta Health website at www.augustahealth.com and clicking on "Click Here: For COVID-19 Information and Vaccine Availability" at the top of the home page.

Sincerely,
Mary N. Mannix, FACHE
President and Chief
Executive Officer