



**First
Presbyterian
Church**
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns -Online.

September 3, 2021 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement.*



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

PDA is mobilized and has begun delivering

immediate aid to those impacted by Hurricane Ida. The initial assessment of the damage is staggering. The needs of those impacted is changing daily because of lack of access to power, refrigeration, water and housing. This will be a long-term commitment to the people impacted by this catastrophic destruction.

PDA will continue to work with Presbyterian leadership to respond to Hurricane Ida and remain engaged in the recovery efforts during the hurricane season of 2021, during which several named storms are expected to impact the region. After initial needs are addressed, PDA will remain — providing emotional and spiritual care and Long-Term Recovery to address unmet needs. We invite you to join in this effort.

Gifts can be [made online](#), by phone at (800) 872-3283 or by check, which can be made payable and mailed to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

COVID average Incidence Rate per 100,000
from the Virginia Dept of Health.

Augusta County:	121.2
Harrisonburg	66.9
Rockingham	47.7
Staunton	57.3
Waynesboro	56.2
Average/100K	69.8

**Level of Community
Transmission**

High

Substantial

Moderate

Low



COVID-19 Information

Covid-19 Update

With the surge in new covid cases, some of you have asked for guidance in what to do

now. Hospitals are again being over-run, and elective surgeries are cancelled or postponed, due to the need for beds for covid patients. We had a brief reprieve, it seemed, but we need to consider what we know now, and how to respond as communities of faith, as numbers are skyrocketing again.

Here is what we know:

"The vaccines work. A peer-reviewed study was published in the medical journal Lancet. The data, gathered from December 8, 2020, through July 4, 2021, show that of more than 1.2 million adults who received a first dose, fewer than 0.5% reported contracting breakthrough infections two weeks or more after getting the shot. Among those who got both shots, fewer than 0.2% experienced a breakthrough infection a week or more after getting their second shot.

Masks work. Another recent study showed that the incidence of flu cases, in November 2020 was approximately 91% lower than in November 2019, according to the data. Flu vaccines were up but we were still under significant masking. Overall we had 1% of the number of hospitalizations for flu nationally in 2020 than in previous years. Yes – masks work." From Lancet: (thanks to Lisa Allgood, EP of Cincinnati Presbytery)

That said, cases are still rising, due to the Delta variant and the number of unvaccinated people in the population, as well as the resumption of school and church programs.

In Virginia's Central Shenandoah Health District, (where nearly all of our VA congregations are) on February 14, 2021, there were 426 new cases, on August 22, 2021, there were 912 new cases- more than doubled.

In West Virginia, there were 697 new cases on January 17, 2021, on September 2, 2021 there are 1,632 new cases of covid - again, more than doubled. Of the 8 counties in West Virginia this Presbytery has churches in, 6 are in red, 2 in orange-- all indicators of high levels of cases and transmission.

What then, are congregations, Sessions, and their pastors to do?

- Encourage vaccinations, and consider partnering with local health departments to use the church as a vaccination site. Give rides to people who cannot get to vaccination sites.
- Wear masks, indoors, whether vaccinated or not.

I know the information changes rapidly, sometimes daily. I know we are tired. But I also know that Jesus commands us to love one another, even as He has loved us. Protecting others' health and well-being is part of our covenantal way of life as Presbyterians.

If you have any questions, please contact the Presbytery office.

Rev. Dr. Nancy Meehan Yao, Associate General Presbyter assocgp@shenpres.org

Sources of Information

click on the links

[PC\(USA\) News](#)

[Virginia Department of Health updates](#)

Sources of Inspiration

click on the links

[Daily Readings from the Lectionary](#)

[Jan Edmiston's Blog](#)

[The Upper Room Devotional](#)

Sources of Fun

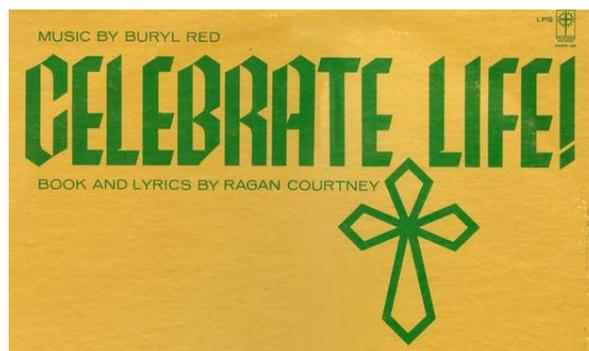
click on the links

[Today's Holiday](#)

[Mr. Boffo](#)

Music Notes for this week.

The anthem this week will be "In Remembrance of Me," with text by Ragan Courtney and music by Buryl Red. It is the most popular song from their 1972 musical, *Celebrate Life*, a retelling of the life of Jesus through the witnesses of Matthew, Mark Luke and John.



This communion-centered piece amplifies Jesus' charge to his disciples at the Last Supper: *to heal the sick, feed the hungry and pray for the time that God's will is done.*



So, where do you see yourself in September?

Our Worship Channels

click on the logos



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