



First
Presbyterian
Church
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns *Online*

May 10, 2023 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement*



PC (USA) Stated Clerk Stepping Down

J. Herbert Nelson, II will leave position on June 30

By Lucinda Isaacs and Rose Schrott Taylor, Presbyterian Outlook. J. Herbert Nelson, II, the chief ecclesial officer of the PC(USA), has announced he will be stepping down from the role of stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) effective June 30. This follows his announcement at the April 20 meeting of the Committee on the Office of General Assembly (COGA) that he will not be seeking a third term as, stated clerk.



Nelson.

“I have sought God’s will my entire life, following in the footsteps of my father and grandfather to preach the gospel in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) I believe that God calls us into new seasons in our life of discipleship. Following many conversations with my wife and daughter, I believe I have entered into this new season,” Nelson said in a PC(USA) news release. “This was not an easy decision, but I feel it is the right one to make for my family and the church in this time of change.”

Nelson was elected to his first four-year term at the 2016 General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, and was re-elected at the 2020 General Assembly, which was held virtually because of the COVID pandemic. Two assemblies during his tenure were during the pandemic. His current term expires in 2024.

According to the Office of General Assembly website, the duties of the stated clerk include “interpreting assembly actions, representing the church on various denominational and ecumenical councils, witnessing on behalf of the church to social justice issues, and making statements as directed by an assembly.”

Per the Standing Rules of the General Assembly, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) will be designating an acting stated clerk by June 30 (see Standing Rules of the General Assembly H.2.c.). The acting stated clerk will be in place until the General Assembly elects a new stated clerk at the 226th General Assembly in July of 2024.

“We’ve had long days trying to figure out how to do a General Assembly and we’ve been a conduit to other denominations and have helped them get through their assembly meetings,” Nelson said to COGA on Thursday. “We’ve dealt with some hard things, but we’ve been able to do what was necessary. For myself, I feel there is some completion. It’s a time for other individuals to step up and deal with the issue of where we go next. It needs to happen.”

“There comes a time where you have to declare that you’ve done what you think you’ve needed to do,” Nelson said to COGA last week. “There is no bitterness. I thank God for the best job I’ve ever had with some of the best people I’ve ever worked with.”

Music Notes for May 14.



Kocher.

Easter season continues, and this week, we sing two hymns that celebrate creation. The opening hymn will be *For the Beauty of the Earth*, with music composed by Conrad Kocher (1786-1872). The German native trained in Russia as a teenager, but moved back to his homeland to study the works of Haydn and Mozart. He settled in Stuttgart, where he founded the School for Sacred Song in 1821. Kocher also composed an oratorio, two operas and some sonatas as well as a treatise on church music. The melody of the hymn was later revised by William Henry Monk (1823-1889).

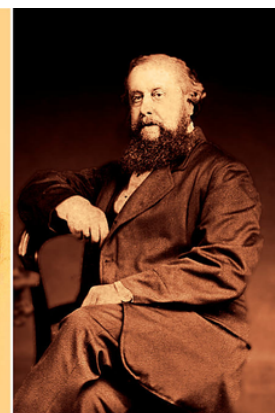
In 1887, Monk also adapted the music for the closing hymn, *All Things Bright and Beautiful*.

While the melody came from a 17th-century folk tune, *The Twenty-Ninth of May*, the tune name for the hymn is ROYAL OAK, so named for a tree at Boscobel, Shropshire, England, in which King Charles II supposedly hid himself in 1651.

The first four lines of the hymn were also used as titles for the series of veterinary short story collections by James Herriot, the pen name of James Alfred Wight.



Monk.



Worship This Week.

Psalm 66: 16-20

1 Peter 3:13-22

Sermon: *All things being equal...*



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This Week in History.



The Cunard Liner *RMS Lusitania* is torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, losing 1,198 of its 1,924 passengers, including 114 Americans.

May 7, 1915

Abolitionist leader John Brown is born in Torrington, CT. A Tanner by trade, he was a devoted Evangelical Christian and ardent abolitionist. On October 16, 1859 He led an attack on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, VA, seeking weapons for his "army of emancipation." In the ensuing skirmishes, 10 of Brown's followers will killed, including two of his sons; they killed four and wounded nine. After two days, Brown surrendered to Marines under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee. He was convicted by the Commonwealth of Virginia of treason, murder, and inciting slaves to rebellion, and hanged on December 2, 1859.

May 9, 1800



Israel Isidore Baline is born in Tyumen, Russia. At the age of four, he moved with his family to New York City, where he would earn money singing in saloons and on street corners after the death of his father. Using the pen name Irving Berlin, he became one of America's greatest songwriters, despite his inability to read or write musical notation.

May 11, 1888



Harry S. Truman is born in Lamar, MO. After working various jobs, serving as an artillery Lieutenant in World War I, and marginally successful business ventures, he entered politics. He was elected a Jackson County Judge (the equivalent of county commissioner), before winning a Senate seat in 1934, where he made his reputation as chair of the Subcommittee on War Mobilization ("The Truman Committee"), which investigated corruption in military contracts. Elected Vice President in 1944, he became president upon the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt in April 1945. The last of nine Presidents who did not attend college, his straightforward, no-nonsense style earned him the nickname, "Give 'em hell, Harry."

May 8, 1884



The Union Pacific and Central Pacific railways were linked at Promontory Point, UT. A golden spike was driven by Leland Stanford, president of the Central Pacific, to celebrate the linkage.

May 10, 1869



King George VI was crowned at Westminster Abbey in London, following the abdication of his brother, Edward VIII.

May 12, 1937



The U.S. Congress declares war on Mexico, making good on the platform of President James K. Polk, who campaigned for expanding U.S. territory to Oregon, California and Texas. The controversial struggle for 'Manifest Destiny' eventually cost the lives of 11,300 U.S. soldiers and resulted in the annexation of lands that became parts of Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah and Colorado. The war ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

May 13, 1846