



#### **A New Year, A New Beginning?**

I get it. We all have hopes of the New Year bringing with it all sorts of new beginnings and opportunities. “This is the year!” we say. We buy gym memberships, read new cookbooks, even sign up for new on-line dating websites. Resolutions, goals, bucket list items; the lists are non-stop.



Many people will say it takes about two months to form a new habit—66 days to be exact (because we’re all looking for the quick answer). The reality, however, is that most of our habits have been formed over years; not days. In most cases, our entire lives have shaped us into who we are today, and how we live in this world. It takes time to develop new habits!

Many churches are creatures of habit in the same way as most of us as individuals are today. We call them “traditions” sometimes, and organizing our congregation over 238 years leaves plenty of room to create these habits! Speaking of which, going to church on Sundays...that’s a habit as well. 😊

So are we resigned to repeating the same old habits and practices we have in our lives each year, despite our best intentions? Well, no. I will say, however, that we also don’t simply start out as new creatures just because the calendar changed from one year to the next...as much as we’d like for it to be that way. For any habit to take hold, the first step is acknowledging the reality of the situation today. For us to change for the better, we need to know where we have come from, what our strengths and weaknesses are, and we need to embrace who we are currently.

In the same way, churches just don’t change suddenly into something completely new based on a new pastor or a new year. This is where interim ministry can be helpful.

With this New Year, I’d like for us to think about developing the habit of preparing ourselves for the next chapter of our congregational life. We do so by identifying and acknowledging who we are today as Old Stone Church.

Last summer, Session started a mission study exploring who we are as a congregation. This year we seek to build upon these efforts as we welcome a new class of Session elders, as we officially form a Pastor Nominating Committee this spring, and as we listen from you on who we are as Old Stone, and who you feel God is calling us to be. What habits have we developed over the years? What habits would we like to develop this new year?

It may take longer than 66 days, but as we continue along with this transitional chapter, we are encouraged at the new habits taking shape, the results beginning to show, and the hope of a new tomorrow forming before our very eyes.

In Christ,

Pastor Jeff

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#### **Congratulations to Brennan Wood!**

We are thrilled to announce that Dr. Brennan Wood has accepted the

Director of Music position! We are happy that he will continue to grace us with his talents and know he is the perfect person for the job. Congratulations, Brennan!



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### **Session Highlights - December 1, 2021 Stated Meeting:**

The Session of OSPC met for their regular Stated meeting on Wednesday, December 1. Nine Elders were in attendance, along with the Moderator, Rev. Jeff Binder; Clerk, Nancy Smallenberger and Educator/Program Coordinator, Amy Kesterson.

A report was given on the recent meeting of the Reopening Task Force. At this time the Session formally approved the creation of the Task Force. It was also agreed to accept the Task Force recommendations to continue with the current guidelines - to encourage mask wearing, social distancing when possible, no meals and using individual prepackaged communion elements.

The Session heard a report from the Nominating Committee and have called a Congregational Meeting to be held immediately after the morning worship service on Sunday, December 19, to elect Elders, Class of 2024; Trustees, Class of 2024, and individuals to serve on the 2022 Nominating Committee.

Financial reports had been included in the Session information emailed prior to the meeting. Committee moderators were reminded that they needed to submit their budget requests for 2022 so that the Stewardship/Finance committee could begin working on the 2022 budget.

It was announced by the Personnel committee that Brennan Wood has accepted the position of Director of Music.

The next Stated meeting will be Wednesday, January 5, 2022.

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### **Reopening Task Force:**

Old Stone's Session recently appointed a Reopening Task Force for the purpose of making recommendations to the Session on when and how to safely reopen church activities as the pandemic continues to evolve. The Reopening Task Force met on November 18, 2021. Bill Cunningham, Polly Cunningham, Craig Boisvert, Nancy Greenstreet, Amy Kesterson, Molly McMillion, Andy Kelso, Amy Meadows, Jen Runyon, and Rev. Jeff Binder were present. Several others could not attend.

Using the current guidelines instituted by the Session regarding church participation during the pandemic, the group decided that we would continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these decisions and to use the Center for Disease Control tracker guidelines to make recommendations for our session.

Reviewing the status of the pandemic this week, it was reported that all counties in WV, including Greenbrier, are in the red zone or High for community transmission, based upon percent positivity (those testing positive to Covid) and number of cases. Only 34.8% of the total population in Greenbrier County is fully vaccinated including children under 12 years of age. Only 57.3 % of the total population greater than 65 years is fully vaccinated. Although county statistics show a slight trend toward fewer cases and with county deaths currently suppressed, cases are showing an increase nationwide (up 16.1% from the previous week). Therefore, we must all still maintain recommended guidelines to protect our church family and community. No guidelines are mandated for church activities that include worship service, children's activities, and groups using our church, but the task force recommends that everyone should continue to wear masks inside church buildings and social distancing guidelines be followed. The task force recommends we continue the current policy of not having events with food or drink until the time of lower community transmission status occurs.

The task force is deeply appreciative of all efforts by our membership to adhere to these guidelines during this long period of pandemic time and encourages all members to immediately get immunized and boosted if available, to wear masks, to social distance, and pray for patience while we continue to endure this pandemic so that we can safely and eventually seek the normalcy we all miss in practicing our faith.

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### **Stewardship Financial Update:**

<b>Old Stone Presbyterian Church Financial Update Through November, 2021</b>				
	November Actual	Actual to Date	Budget to Date	2021 Annual
Pledges Received	\$32,725.00	\$293,062.00	\$332,452.00	\$358,706.00
Other Offerings	\$3,153.00	\$30,159.00	\$40,570.00	\$46,279.00
Other Income	\$84.00	\$2,450.00	\$2,684.00	\$2,850.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$35,962.00</b>	<b>\$325,671.00</b>	<b>\$375,706.00</b>	<b>\$407,835.00</b>
Expenses	\$29,307.00	\$315,731.00	\$372,318.00	\$407,830.00
Net Ordinary Receipts	\$6,654.00	\$9,940.00	\$3,387.00	\$5.00

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### **Presbyterian Women Afternoon Circle:**

The P.W. Afternoon Circle plans to meet in the Activity Room of the church at 1:00pm on Wednesday, January 12th.

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### **Presbyterian Women Evening Circle:**

The P.W. Evening Circle plans to meet via Zoom at 7:00pm on Wednesday, January 12th. Please contact Pam Lewis for the Zoom link.

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### **Poinsettia Dedications:**

In memory of Margaret Mary & Bill Lewis given by Chuck and Lou Ella Lewis.

In memory of Lucille Skaggs, William & Helen Irons, & Edith & Harvey Wilson given by John & Vicki Wilson.

In memory of James W. Scarborough, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Scarborough, and Mr. & Mrs. William Coleman, Sr. given by Mary Scarborough.

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Riley Satterfield and Mr. & Mrs. Carter Gallagher given by the Satterfield family.

In memory of Clint Nichols, a fountain of goodness and joy, given by the Irons family.

In memory of her parents, Bill & Nancy Cosby Coleman, given by Jane Coleman.

In memory of Nancy Y. Coleman, Bill & Ethel Coleman, Avanelle Young Corley & Browne Corley & E. Linwood Young given by Jim Coleman.

In memory of Oretha Franke given by Richard Franke & family.

In memory and in honor of the Dr. John F. Montgomery family given by Herbert S. and Katy Harper Montgomery and Joan F. Montgomery.

In memory and in honor of the John Thompson Harper family given by Herbert S. and Katy Montgomery, James Gray and Laura Tuckwiller Montgomery, John Harper and LeeAnn Lane Montgomery.

In memory of her husband, Munir Yarid, given by Yvette Yarid.

In memory of Alice Plumley Jeffries given by Charles & Patti Plumley.

In loving memory of Joe Black & Mary Hayes given by Carol Cales.

In memory of Clint Nichols given by the Irons family.

In loving memory of Ronald Benjamin Snyder, Judith Ann Bradford, and William Paul Bradford given by the Snyder family.

In memory of Bill & Margaret Mary Lewis, Glenn Gilkerson, Dr. Einer & Edna Rasmussen, Edward & Elva Phipps, Elizabeth Meece, Cynde Lewis Kish, Jeff Lewis, Karen Gilkerson McDaniel, and Sandy Gilkerson Cochran by Ben & Pam Lewis.



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### **A Thank-You from Townley Hamilton:**

Dear Anonymous Friend or Friends,

Thank you for the very thoughtful and beautiful flower dedication on Sunday, December 12th in honor of my birthday! I was so surprised and it truly touched my heart. Just before church started, many were wishing me “Happy Birthday”. I wondered how so many knew my birthday was near until Pastor Binder announced the dedication and I looked in the bulletin. Oh my goodness, what a lovely surprise! It was a wonderful morning and a very special way to start my “Birthday Week”. Thank you so much for your kindness. I wish you a very happy and healthy New Year.



Sincerely,  
Townley Hamilton

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### **Fellowship Activities Survey:**

If you haven't filled out the Fellowship Activities Survey yet, please print the survey below and return it to the offering basket during your next visit. Surveys can also be dropped off in the secure mailbox on the front porch of the Education Building. There will be extra copies in the narthex if you wish to pick up a printed copy from the church. Thank you!

## Fellowship Activities Survey

Please place a checkmark next to the activities listed below that you would be interested in:

- |                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cookie Exchange _____             | Board Games _____             |
| Watch a Movie _____               | Card Games _____              |
| Walking Group _____               | Crafting _____                |
| Bicycling Group _____             | Crochet/Knitting Group _____  |
| Genealogy Group _____             | Sing Along/Karaoke _____      |
| Coloring/Drawing/Painting _____   | Welcome a Guest Speaker _____ |
| Favorite Things/Show & Tell _____ |                               |

Other Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions or would like to share additional thoughts, please contact Karen Leland at (985) 290-0725.

Please place your completed survey in the offering basket or in the secure mailbox located on the front porch of the Education Building.

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### December Birthdays

*12/01 Amy Ahern  
12/01 Linda Walls  
12/04 Herb Pearis  
12/07 Hallie Nemicik  
12/09 Frances Crane  
12/09 Paige Totten  
12/11 Betsey Satterfield  
12/16 Townley Hamilton  
12/28 Cliff Huffman*

### January Birthdays

*01/06 Susan Graham  
01/08 Marcia Leitch  
01/08 Corbin Long  
01/11 Miriam "Whicky" Knight  
01/12 Grace Brown  
01/12 Amy Meadows  
01/13 Suzanne Snyder  
01/16 Julia Smith  
01/16 Lauren Smith  
01/17 Rodney Weikle  
01/18 Beverly Kucera  
01/21 Tracy Peyton  
01/22 Linda Monti  
01/23 Hanno Kirk  
01/27 Nancy Greenstreet  
01/30 Meg Kirkham*

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## Christmas Eve Worship Service - Friday at 7:30pm

This is a reminder that our Christmas Eve worship service will be held at 7:30pm on Friday, December 24th. Please join us if you are able! For those unable to attend, the service will be available to watch on our YouTube page.

(<https://www.youtube.com/c/OldStonePresbyterianChurch>)

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### Virtual Worship Links and Information:

- Live Video from the Old Stone Presbyterian Church Sanctuary Begins at 11:00am: <https://www.youtube.com/c/OldStonePresbyterianChurch>
  - Live Broadcasting on the Radio Begins at 11:00am: 103.1FM or <https://www.facebook.com/103.1BearCountry> or <https://tunein.com/radio/The-Bear-103-1031-s30113/>
  - In-Person Worship Guidelines are Available Here: [www.oldstonechurchwv.com](http://www.oldstonechurchwv.com)
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Just a reminder:

You will NEVER get an email or text from the church or your pastor asking you to purchase gift cards because we are busy or in a meeting.

If you receive one of these messages, it will come from an email other than @oldstonechurchwv.com or a phone number not in use by a church staff member. Simply report it to the church and delete. Do not respond. We are so sorry for the inconvenience these fraudulent activities (that have been happening for years to churches everywhere-not just here) continue to cause!