

Old Presbyterian Meeting House All-Church Retreat at Massanetta Springs, VA

Frequently Asked Questions

Where is the Retreat held?

Massanetta Springs is a Presbyterian conference center nestled on 200 acres of woodlands and meadows in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, near Harrisonburg (130 miles, about a 2 ½ hour drive west of Alexandria). It is a designated National Historic District that includes the original spring house and 1910 historic hotel, with wide front and rear porches with rocking chairs in which to relax.

The conference center includes the old hotel where we check in and dine and has a lobby with comfortable seating. The center also includes separate lodging facilities, and a building with meeting rooms where the children and youth meet for their programs and where our intergenerational fun activities occur. The adult program takes place in the Hubler Lodge conference room. For more information about the facilities, including photos, visit www.massanettasprings.org.

Who comes to the Retreat?

All ages of Meeting House members come to the Retreat, from babes-in-arms to older adults, from singles to families with children. Some folks have been coming for years; others will be attending for the first time.

What if I don't know anyone attending the Retreat?

Don't worry! One of the best reasons to attend the Retreat is to get to know other Meeting House members. We devote a great deal of energy to help people feel welcome at the Retreat: everyone wears name tags, there's a Friday evening "icebreaker" activity, shared meals at large community tables, discussion break-outs in the adult and youth educational program and social activities throughout the weekend. The small group setting at the Retreat (around 100 people) and the relaxed pace of the weekend also help to make it easier to meet and talk to new people.

What will we do?

The Retreat includes a combination of stimulating educational programming, group fun, community worship and time for quiet reflection during the weekend. It's a schedule and program that is designed to appeal:

- **Friday.** Arrive in the early evening for registration and room assignment, dinner at 7 p.m. and a group "get to know you" activity which ends with evening vespers.
- **Saturday.** Awake in the morning and meet on the hotel front porch for morning prayer and reflections. After breakfast, we're off to our educational programs for the morning: separate activities for adults, pre-school, school-age and youth. Following lunch there is free time for games, crafts and activities including a hike in the woods. Or if you prefer, read a book under a tree, visit with a friend while rocking on the front porch or take a nap.

We meet back for another program activity before dinner. The evening is filled with fun and fellowship all together including songs, stories, square dancing, campfire and s'mores.

- **Sunday.** After prayer, reflections and breakfast, we meet in groups for our final educational program time. We close the weekend together in community with an intimate, laity-led worship service that some people say is one of their favorite services of the year. Lunch is served before we depart for home.

Where do we sleep?

We stay in rooms in the hotel annex (Richardson Dorm) and Hubler Lodge. Richardson Dorm has rooms with two twin beds that share a bath with an adjoining room. Cots for children can be requested and added to these rooms. Don't expect much in the way of decorating - they are spare dorm-like rooms but are clean, neat, and quiet. Hubler Lodge features hotel-style rooms with two queen beds and a private bath and requires an additional fee. *NOTE: The number of Lodge rooms is limited and are allocated in order of the date reserved.*

What is the adult educational program like?

The adult program consists of three in-depth sessions together, two on Saturday and one on Sunday morning, giving us an opportunity to dig deep into this year's topic: ***Grounded in Grace***, exploring how we can remain grounded in the knowledge of God's grace in an era of anxiety, change and turmoil. Our leader will be Dr. Martha Moore-Keish, JB Green Professor of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta. She will lead us in exploration of theological and practical resources from our Reformed tradition, to remind ourselves of the abiding grace of God, in whom alone we place our trust.

What about the program for children and youth?

Children and youth programming is provided by our gifted Meeting House educators Noelle Castin and Mary Pratt Perry (as well as volunteers) and includes Bible lessons, crafts, games and songs. They are also given opportunities to participate in Sunday worship.

What about childcare?

For young ones up to three years of age, tender loving childcare is provided by our own Meeting House childcare staff. Childcare is provided during Saturday and Sunday adult program times and during worship. Small children are welcome during all meals and intergenerational activities. Cribs are available for a small fee.

Where do we eat?

Shared meals are a wonderful time of fellowship at the Retreat. We'll eat together at large tables in the dining hall located in the historic hotel. Meals are served buffet-style and a typical meal consists of two entrees, several side dishes, and for lunch and supper, a salad bar and dessert. Meals are basic and hearty family-style cooking. Coffee and tea are also available early in the morning in the hotel lobby, and during the adult education morning sessions.

What about food allergies and special dietary requirements?

Please designate any food allergies or special dietary requirements when you register for the Retreat on-line. The conference center will be informed and do their best to accommodate your needs.

What is the cost to participate?

Fees include lodging for two nights and six meals and vary depending on the number of people in your family and the lodging you choose. A detailed cost list is available at OPMH.org/retreat.

What if I still have questions?

Call or email Retreat committee members Martha Gibson (eadg@verizon.net or 703-489-8451) or Mary Hill (crpowell@verizon.net or 703-231-7167) who are happy to answer all your questions. Martha can also help arrange transportation with others if you are unable to drive.

Sounds great! How do I sign up?

Retreat registration is available online and will begin on the Monday after Rally Day, September 8th at 8 AM at OPMH.org/retreat. The last day to sign up is Monday, October 20th. If you need assistance with registration, please contact Ellen Haas or Vicki Stones in the church office (703-549-6670).