

# JOHN CALVIN *Presbytery*

[jcpresbytery.com](http://jcpresbytery.com)

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## Prayers Requested .....

- The congregations of John Calvin Presbytery...
- For all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, that they may know the peace that passes all human understanding in Jesus Christ our Lord....
- All churches seeking a new pastor, to understand God's call moving forward.  
First Presbyterian Church, Aurora, Missouri  
First Presbyterian Church, Carthage, Missouri  
First Presbyterian Church, Chanute, Kansas  
Crane Presbyterian Church, Crane, Missouri  
Community Presbyterian Church, Forsyth, Missouri  
First Presbyterian Church, Nevada, Missouri  
First Presbyterian Church, Sarcoxie, Missouri  
First Presbyterian Church, Scammon, Kansas
- JCPDA
- JC Living Waters Mission Team
- All Pastors of John Calvin Presbytery
- Britney Shurtz, cancer treatments, daughter-in-law of Charley Shurtz.  
Charley is pastor at St. Andrew@Hideaway

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## PCUSA Responds to Coronavirus

### [COVID-19 resources for churches and individuals](#)

Coronavirus: Faith, not fear. In response to increased anxieties and concerns around the global outbreak of COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its ministries have compiled a series of resources for pastors, congregational leaders and members.

[www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)

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Greetings friends in Christ,

The General Council of John Calvin Presbytery met by Zoom this morning for prayer and discussion of matters that concern all of us during the Coronavirus outbreak. See articles by our presbytery moderator and council moderator for how they're adjusting ministries in their settings.

We will be **collecting strategies** from our presbytery and beyond for continuing to reach out to those around us. To share your strategies, email them to [gwilson@jcpresbytery.com](mailto:gwilson@jcpresbytery.com) they will be posted on the [website](#). Here are some:

**Zoom:** If your session would like to use the presbytery's Zoom account for a session meeting by videoconference, I can schedule that for you and send you a link. Our account lets us have one meeting at a time. Alternately, a free Zoom account will let you gather for 40 minutes. (Then everyone has to log back in. I have done several meetings this way. It got the job done. ) The basic paid account is \$15/month. There are discounts if you're willing to pay ahead.

**Worship by Internet:** Some churches are planning to use Facebook Live for worship. Others will record the sermon, music and liturgy ahead and share it via a blog or other web presence. We may swamp the internet with all of this, so if at first you don't succeed, try again later.

**Worship in Cars and Parking Lots:** I read that one church plans to have their Palm Sunday service with everyone in their cars, making a parade with their palms by driving through the church's neighborhood. Another church is planning to worship on their parking lot when the weather warms up. This may be an option for some. Now might be a good time to check into your ability to have sound equipment outside.

**Missions:** Many churches are finding ways to continue their benevolent ministries. With schools and senior centers closed, this is much needed. Otherwise, some will go hungry.

**Giving:** Many individuals and businesses will be adversely affected by the changes we're being asked to make. Do what you can to throw business their way. Some of those affected will be unable to support the church during this time. Consider asking those who are able to be especially generous during this crisis. I have heard from several churches that have intended to establish online giving for some time, but now will get it done.

As always, there is much to do. We're better together. Let's stay in touch and share support and ideas.

In Christ,

Malinda Spencer  
Pastoral Presbyter  
John Calvin Presbytery

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Dear John Calvin Presbytery Friends,

These are unprecedented times for our world and for the church. The coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic has upended the way we think about everything from travel to basic social interactions, and the church is not exempt. In times such as these we each have an important role to play as leaders of the faith. We need to speak words of wisdom and discernment, guiding our local communities in paths that will keep them and others safe, while not fanning the flames of unfounded fear, suspicion, or condemnation. Decisions about how your local congregation will respond to this crisis can only be made by the local church; each Pastor and Session must use their own discernment to prayerfully consider how to meet this challenge. However, as Moderator I would offer my guidance.

As you consider how to respond I would counsel you to ask this question: what message does our decision send to our members and our community? While this is always a valuable tool for discernment it is even more so in these days. If we decide to continue to hold activities out of a loving desire to preserve a sense of normalcy for our congregation, we might inadvertently send the message that their health, and the health of the broader community, is less valuable than our routine. At the same time, if we decide to retreat into total isolation out of a valid desire to protect those at high risk in our congregation, we might unintentionally break the social bonds that are so necessary if we are to weather this storm together.

I would urge your congregation to look to our public health officials at the CDC and your local health department for guidance on when to suspend activities, especially remembering that many in our congregations are considered at higher risk. I would also urge your congregation to put into place concrete measures to connect with one another in these days of social distancing. From phone calls to video chats there are many ways to build community that do not place our congregations at risk. We will continue to share resources with you over the coming weeks. Most of all, I ask for your prayers. Pray for our presbytery that we may act with wisdom, for those impacted by COVID19 through illness or

economic hardship, and for all those who remain on the frontlines of caring for our community. Psalm 139 assures us that there is nowhere we can go where God has not already traveled, so it is still today.

Thanks be to God,

Reverend Christopher Miller  
Moderator, John Calvin Presbytery  
Pastor, Trinity PCUSA, Springfield, Missouri

Dear Friends,

First, you have to know that Parsons is a small town and First Parsons is a small church. The majority of our members are older. We are welcoming new families who are younger, but it has been a slow climb. The Session of First Parsons is a solid group of Presbyterians. They are also Kansans. From my several year study of Kansans, I have drawn a few generalizations. They are the nicest people you will meet. They are also some of the strongest you will meet as well. They have a certain grit to them that allows them to persevere through any difficulty—snow storm, tornado, drought, flood, whatever you throw at them, they take a deep breath, smile, and bake an apple crisp. They also eat an amazing amount of fried chicken.

The question of response to the virus threat was quickly shut down a few weeks ago. They decided then that we would increase our cleaning measures, restock the soap, and carry on. As the level of intensity increased, they washed their hands more. They held distance. They quit shaking hands. But they absolutely refused to cancel in person worship.

Two of my 82-year-old members said it best. They need Jesus now more than ever. They need to be in the sanctuary. They need the Spirit to well up the way it does in a group. We have plenty of room in our sanctuary for the 30–45 souls who attend regularly to spread out. We adapted our offering practice so that only one person touches the plate. We adapted Communion to provide protection. We currently livestream and we offered training to those who want to stay home but are not comfortable with technology.

Then in a Session meeting we thought would be used to officially adopt a stringent plan of self-monitoring, social distancing, and hand washing, we received notification that all the schools in Kansas were closed. That news changed the direction of our conversation.

It was decided at that time that we would open our doors at 10:45 this Sunday and hurry everyone out after an abbreviated service. It was also decided that the most probable timeline would have us totally online by next Sunday. The two 82-year-old members would be given permission to be in the sanctuary during the live streaming.

All of our other activities have been suspended. We have suspended the choir we share with the local Disciples of Christ congregation. We have modified our work with the children of the community. Instead of providing a meeting place and food, we are supplying grab and go bags once a week.

This is our faithful and painful decision.

Christ has called us to be salt and light to the world. We are meant to be the ones showing what it means to live in the kingdom of God. We so love each other that we must do the very best we can to be faithful.

Each congregation must do what it discerns God is calling them to do. This situation is fluid and the intensity of change threatens to overwhelm us. Fortunately, we are the body of Christ and working together we will adapt. We are, after all, those who are reformed and always being reformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thanks be to God.

Blessings to all,

Reverend Jennifer Dawson  
General Council Moderator  
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church Parsons, Kansas  
214-930-1726

**Out of an abundance of caution and with regard for CDC recommendations, we have decided to cancel all spring events, including our luncheon in Springfield, out of concern for all children, families and friends of PCHAS.**

This special fundraising lunch was to be held at the Twin Oaks Country Club on April 2. Now, more than ever, the children and families we serve need our services, and we need your support to keep them operational. We invite you to keep us in prayer. For more information on how to become involved, please reach out to Patty Kissinger 573-338-3766, or [patty.kissinger@pchas.org](mailto:patty.kissinger@pchas.org)

There will be an opportunity to participate in a "virtual" luncheon experience, where we can hear about the important work we are doing! Reach out to be included!

Thanks!

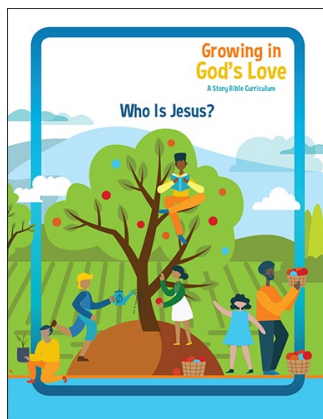
**Patty Kissinger**  
Development Officer  
Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services

## Spirit of Stewardship Conference

**Conference has been canceled.**



**Looking for the right curriculum for your children and youth?  
We are here to help.**



### Story Bible Curriculum

**COMING THIS SUMMER!** *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible Curriculum* is a relational and imaginative children's curriculum for ages 5-10. This unit-based curriculum is the companion of *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*. Using stories from the story Bible, the curriculum explores each one in more depth with intergenerational activities for each session.

[Learn more about this new curriculum](#), [download a sample session](#), and [sign up to receive email updates about the story Bible curriculum](#).

### Growing in Grace and Gratitude

This children's curriculum is available for toddlers up through age 10. It explores the stories of the Bible through the lens of grace. This curriculum is incredibly friendly for your children with special needs and guides leaders through the process of adapting lessons as necessary to meet those needs.

This curriculum is available as print or download for [ages 3-5](#), [ages 5-7](#), [ages 8-10](#) and [multiage for ages 5-10](#). See a [sample of the multiage curriculum](#). There is also a permanent resource for [Toddlers](#).



## Multi-Age Grades K-6



**SPRING 2020**

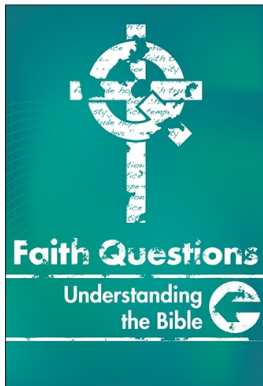
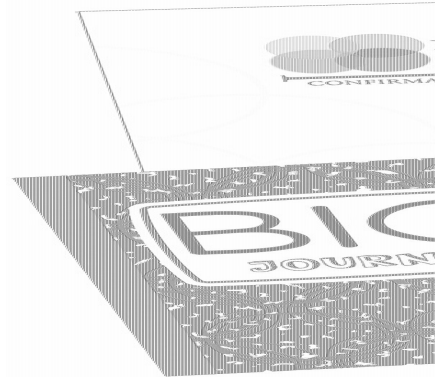
## Feasting on the Word: Children & Youth

Study the lectionary together with Feasting on the Word Curriculum. Adding *Joining the Feast* to the collection provides a great connection to worship from the Sunday school hour and include weekly children's bulletins, ideas for children's messages, and liturgy ideas. This quarterly curriculum is for children in [grades K-2](#), [grades 3-4](#), [twens \(5-6\)](#), [multiage \(K-6\)](#), and [youth](#). All age levels are available for print or download.

### Big God Big Questions

Confirmation is a big deal. *Big God Big Questions* encourages youth and parents to take it seriously. This curriculum explores what it means to answer the questions we are asked when we join the church, such as What does it mean to say that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior?

Youth and their mentors will explore questions such as these together through twelve 90-minute sessions or twenty-four 45-minute sessions. Each youth receives a *Big Journal* that helps them along their journey. There are also infographic posters that break down complicated concepts into easy-to-understand, fun visuals. Get a [class set \(two options available\) with everything you need for five students](#). Or [explore each piece](#) individually.



### Faith Questions

Youth can get their questions answered in this unit-based curriculum. Explore a library of topics in categories such as Bible studies, faith basics, real-life topics, and theology.

For a list of all units in this series, go to page 12 in [our online interactive catalog](#).

*Faith Questions* are great for Sunday school and youth groups. These topical studies are four to six-week sessions.

[Get your next Faith Question study.](#)

### Simple Sundays

Looking for easy, low-prep sessions for your youth?

Check out *Simple Sundays*.

They explore some fundamental questions about faith.

[View our entire collection of units.](#)

**Simple Sundays**  
**Why Did God Save Me?** **SUM**

## BOUNDARIES TRAINING

Boundaries training April 15, 12:30 at Willow Springs.  
Lunch and check-in at 12:30; boundaries training 1:00-3:00

Willow Springs Presbyterian Church  
210 N. Center St.  
Willow Springs, Missouri

All ministers serving congregations are required to complete boundaries training annually. A few opportunities are scheduled on different days, times, and locations,

to make it possible for everyone to attend.

**If you would like to host a training for your area, please contact Malinda.**

Malinda Spencer  
Pastoral presbyter  
John Calvin Presbytery

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## Contact Us..... How can we help?

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**Please continue to mail all remittances  
Per Capita, Shared Mission and special offerings to:**

John Calvin Presbytery  
P. O. Box 787  
Shell Knob, Missouri 65747

**PULPIT SUPPLY** for a minister leading worship and preaching for a congregation as a visiting minister should ordinarily receive \$100.00, plus the IRS approved mileage amount per vouchered mile (2019 IRS rate \$0.58 per mile). Pulpit Supply is \$100.00 with the understanding that is only if one (1) service is to be prepared. It was approved by COM that if two (2) services are required the honorarium would be \$150.00. If overnight lodging is required, motel and meals should be provided at the church's expense. Honorarium for moderating a session is \$50 plus the IRS approved mileage rate per vouchered mile.

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