

JOHN CALVIN *Presbytery*

Notices

April 10, 2020

jcpresbytery.com

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

Siblings in Christ,

We recognize your plans for a joyous Easter celebration have changed due to the coronavirus outbreak. Many of you are now planning virtual services. Please know you are not alone — we are the Church together, and we are united in the risen Christ on Easter Sunday.



224TH GENERAL
ASSEMBLY (2020)
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

In this time of social distancing, our need for connection has never been greater. With that in mind, we invite you to join us for an Easter celebration and message of hope. Leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) share with you a special Easter worship video, created to help us come together in community on this holiest of days.

You are welcome to use the video however you like. We hope it is helpful for congregations that are unable to hold their own virtual worship. Even congregations that are already streaming worship may wish to watch. You may choose to create a sense of community by asking your congregation to watch the video at an appointed time. Our hope is that Presbyterians might unite in spirit during worship on Easter.

This 40-minute, standalone worship video is available in English, Spanish and Korean. [You may view it or download it here.](#) And we invite you to engage with us on Sunday to share your joyous expressions of Easter on the [Church's Facebook page.](#)

In this time of crisis, the ministry of the Church is more important than ever. We are encouraging Presbyterians to give generously to their local church, providing support for their congregation and community. We also encourage support for **One Great Hour of Sharing** as a witness to the whole Church coming together to support the most vulnerable among us. To accompany the Easter service, [download this bulletin insert](#) highlighting the offering and how it enables the Church's response to crises such as these.

We encourage you to follow the latest news from the Church regarding the coronavirus. [You may sign up to receive daily or weekly updates.](#)

Paul tells us, *"We do not grieve as others who have no hope."* (1 Thess. 4:13). While this crisis may consume our attention, it cannot destroy our hope. We join you in prayer for all those impacted by this pandemic.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II

Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett, President, Executive Director

Kris Valerius, Manager, Denominational Rolls and Statistics, Assistant Stated Clerk

Presbyterian Church (USA), 100 Witherspoon St, Louisville KY 40202
502.569.5427 [direct] 502.767.0554 [cell]

[Download PCUSA Online Easter Service](#)



FROM YOUR PASTORAL PRESBYTER

Malinda Spencer
Pastoral Presbyter
John Calvin Presbytery
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Have you seen suggestions online that during this season of shelter in place is a good time to clean your house or make simple repairs? And maybe the humorous comments that people are making, saying that while they now have time to clean, it's not necessarily getting done?

There are some "housekeeping" practices to do in your church that will make things run more smoothly in the COVID-19 season and going forward. You may have done many of these already.

- Make sure your congregation knows how to contact the church. Maybe more than one way.
- Your pastor may be working many extra hours to stay in contact with your members. Set up a care web, where every person has someone contacting them, and they also contact someone. Weekly might be a good frequency. Make sure those contacts are happening, and be prepared to step in if need be.
- Identify emergency contacts for each household in your church, especially those who live alone.
- Make sure your session (and deacons) have a church directory.
- Cultivate volunteers who will pick up prescriptions, groceries, and other needs.
- Have one or more people follow community news for needs like blood drives, food needs, etc.
- Find ways of worship that work for everyone.
- Try something with Zoom, an online videoconferencing platform. There's a free version. You can do it!
- Offer online giving.
- Have a plan for funerals.
- Plan a service to celebrate when the restrictions are lifted.
- You can perhaps add to these ideas. Like cleaning your house, a little bit at a time makes a difference.
- Resources from the larger church—if you need more information, contact Malinda Spencer
- The Board of Pensions is offering temporary dues relief to congregations with extreme need.
- A consortium of presbytery leaders and volunteers from our synod who planned the (cancelled) Spirit of Stewardship event will make online workshops available. The first workshop, Stewardship During the COVID-19 Season, will be modeled after the one presented for John Calvin Presbytery earlier this week and will be April 28 at 1:00 p.m., with more topics and presenters to come in May and June. Watch the Notices for more details.
- The office of Mission Engagement of the Presbyterian Mission Agency has released a call for the offering. [Follow this link to obtain the call-in script form, audio clip, and video clip.](#)

John Calvin Presbytery Pastor's Lunch

Calling all pastors in John Calvin Presbytery! Gather for lunch and conversation via Zoom.

Register for Pastor's Lunch here!

A note about grief and anxiety during this....slow and frightening slog

- Do not be afraid.
- Fear is the true enemy.
- We are at war with an unseen enemy..
- The shelves are bare.
- There are lines OUTSIDE Walmart with police monitoring temperamental customers who don't remember how to be patient.
- There are people in nursing homes and care facilities who can not see their loved ones, friends, or have contact with their churches.
- There are people sick and dying of COVID 19 and all the other things they were sick and dying from before COVID 19.
- We have to grieve them and bury them in absentia. Seriously – IN ABSENTIA.
- There are tithes and offerings, payrolls and maintenance, government guidelines, virtual worship (how does one even begin to do that?), relief package legalese, Zoom and Facebook Live, preaching to a screen, copyright questions, uploads, phone calls, meetings with unintentionally muted people, technological Luddites and whiz kids, rebels and fear mongers, naysayers and armchair experts, empty streets and parks but open beaches.

Did any of us really know what flattening the curve meant before March 1?

Is it really only April 7? 2020? Still???

Yeah, okay, you now know a bit what my Monday morning was like. Alright, truth, my Monday morning and afternoon. While the content may not always be the same, the frenetic nature of it has been very similar on most days. I am sure this is not unique to pastors or involved lay people, but we have the added responsibility to navigate the spiritual implications of a pandemic. While we do have our faith and our hope in the Good Shepherd to guide us, we are not without stress. Some may be experiencing a great deal of stress. This is, experts tell us, a natural reaction to today's circumstances. We are grieving the stability we have lost, the security of our future, the loss of life, the loss of normalcy. Some are grieving the loss of confidence in institutions they once believed would always be there to provide in emergencies. We have lost something – each of us. We have lost someone – even if that someone is a name on the television. Grief abounds in our society, in our churches, and in our homes.

Grief and stress dear friends. They wear on our immune system, on our sleep patterns, on our memory, and cognitive functions. A few days ago, I realized I was experiencing a profound sense of grief because I have felt it before. My first husband, Kirk, died over 10 years ago. In the midst of that terrible grief years ago, I felt like someone had gone into my brain, opened all the file drawers of information, and thrown all of my organized thoughts into the air. WHOOSH papers and files and thoughts and stress and grief in a huge terrible mess in my brain. In Kirk's time of illness and after his death, I was having to make decisions I did not want to make; decisions I was ill-equipped to make. I had to process huge amounts of information when my brain was overloaded. I had to answer people's questions, do my work, navigate my faith and relationship with God during my very own living book of lamentations. And, you may guess, I struggled to keep up. But over time I found coping mechanisms to deal with the stress of that turbulent time which I continue to utilize during times of great stress. Here is my list of helpful hints for coping with extreme stress – don't worry you don't have to become an expert, just choose any that seem helpful and none if they don't. Just don't stress about it.

2) REST

We feel tired when we grieve and when we experience stress because we are tired. There are

chemicals in our bodies going crazy and one of the best things we can do is rest when our bodies say rest. If we don't, our bodies will make us rest. We will get sick. We will get cranky and people close to us will make us rest. I know there are people out there with responsibilities and young families and other situations which may impact your rest. Do what you can to address that because you need it.

3) GET SOME EXERCISE

Our bodies, minds, and spirits need exercise for so many reasons. When we are extra stressed we feel extra tired, exercise allows the great natural chemicals in our bodies to flow freely, lower our heart rates, make us feel good, increase our oxygen. If you don't exercise, meditate, do yoga, calm your body and breathing. (Six feet apart, people. Six feet apart.)

4) DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU NEED TO HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS RIGHT AWAY OR EVER

If you are an elder, deacon, or other lay person who thinks your pastor be informed like he or she watches CSPAN, PBS, CNN, and FOX News and reads the New York Times, Washington Post, Harvard Medical Journal, Wall Street Journals every day while also spending hours in prayer, correspondence, long range plans in case we are still sheltering in place in Advent, then stop it. If you're a pastor who thinks you need to seem as if you do those things, then stop it. No one deserves that pressure and no one can do what you're asking.

5) GIVE YOURSELF AND OTHERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO FAIL, FORGET, FALL ASLEEP, DROP THE BALL, BE LESS THAN, HEAL, LEARN, RECOVER. YOU KNOW – GRACE

This is important in these days because we are all going through grief and stress due to the COVID19 Outbreak, but we are all experiencing these in different ways and varying degrees. Grace is key to coping with stress and grief because we must be able to walk the difficult path in our own time and pace. This in turn means we need to allow others to do the same. Grace with ourselves and others, loving others as Christ loved us, acknowledging we need help and each other goes a long way to communities and individuals thriving through stress.

6) PRAY –

This one should be at the time and in between each of the others. Pray any way you want to, but pray. If you don't, if you can't, let someone know so they can pray for you until you're able.

This is a sad and challenging time. Give yourself and others a break. Remember Maundy Thursday – love each other and allow yourself to be love. Serve each other and allow yourself to be served.

I hope some of these are helpful. Don't forget, if you like one or two, **WRITE IT DOWN** or you might forget.

Lou Ellen Hartley
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church Rolla, Missouri
Co-Moderator Mission and Nurture Committee

Save the Date!!!

**Equipping the Saints
August 22
Hillcrest Presbyterian Church
Springfield, Missouri
Rodger Nishioka returns to tell us more!**

Advisory Opinion Communion in an Emergency/Pandemic

Advisory Opinion

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

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

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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 \$0.575 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 expense. Honorarium for moderating a session is \$50 plus the IRS approved mileage rate per vouchered mile.

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