



Dear Friends,

This is truly an unprecedented time we are facing as a congregation, nation, and world.

It is with heavy hearts that the Session has suspended in-person worship for March 22 and March 29. It was difficult to make this decision, but their goal is to do our part to flatten the spread of this pandemic.

I will send another email on March 30 detailing plans for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday. For the next two Sundays, at 10:00 a.m., you are invited to join us for worship online. We will continue our exploration of Celtic Spirituality. You can access the worship service by doing any one of the following:

FaceBook - click on the YouTube button on the church's FaceBook page, which will take you here:

<http://bit.ly/RPCworship>

Website – click on the Worship Videos tab on the homepage – www.rpcusa.org

YouTube – <http://bit.ly/RPCyoutube>

Go to www.youtube.com and search for Riverside Presbyterian, IL to go to the church's channel.

The videos of the services will be available any time you want to access them.

For those who have children at home (or adults who are children at heart!) that need activities, go to Sunday School! Our friends at Fourth Presbyterian, Chicago have prepared online lesson plans and are generously sharing them with anyone who would like to use them. Each lesson contains background information for the adults, a family discussion guide, and suggested crafts and activities. Just go to <http://bit.ly/OnlineSundaySchool>

During this time, the Session is committed to paying all our staff. As you know, our expenses continue even without an in-person worship service. If you usually place your check in the offering plate, please mail it to the church at 116 Barrypoint Road, Riverside, IL 60546. You may also give online by clicking this link: <http://bit.ly/RPCgiving>

The entire RPC building is closed, there are no meetings, and we encourage you to stay home and stay safe. During this time, Linda, Ellen, and I will be at the office on a limited, as-needed basis. You may call and leave a message at the church, call my cell phone, or email me. When one of us is in the office, please note that the church doors and office doors are being kept locked to protect the health of the office workers. If you must visit the church, please call first and know that to keep everyone safe, no one is allowed in the office except the staff.

If you have self-quarantined and require any assistance, please reach out to me. I have volunteers ready to be of service. I encourage you to find new ways to be in community with one another.

Throughout Lent, I have asked you to share with me pictures of things you see that remind you of God. Now more than ever, I think being aware of God's presence in our daily lives is extremely important. Keep your pictures coming.

To close, I share with you a prayer attributed to Augustine of Hippo (354-430):

*God of life there are days when the burdens we carry are heavy on our shoulders and weigh us down,
when the road seems dreary and endless, the skies gray and threatening,
when our lives have no music in them, and our hearts are lonely and our souls have lost their courage.*

*Flood the path with light, turn our eyes to where the skies are full of promise;
tune our hearts to brave music; give us the sense of comradeship with heroes and saints of every age;
and so quicken our spirits that we may be able to encourage the souls of all who journey with us on the road of life,
to your honor and glory. Amen.*

I look forward to seeing you at online worship on Sunday morning at 10:00.

Peace,
Dale