



LAS NOTICIAS

Weekly Missive

Christian Denomination Leaders Address Changes: COVID-19



The Arizona judicatory leaders of the Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Church in America, the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), and The Episcopal Church have jointly released the following message regarding changes to worship amid the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak.

Church is not cancelled!!!

But in-person worship is. As leaders of our respective Christian denominations, we have all had to instruct our congregations to cease in person worship and meetings.

And yet, church is not cancelled. How is that so?

Church is not a building, and church is not just worship. Church is the gathering of faithful people through prayer, through love, and through caring for the vulnerable. Church is taking on new forms in light of COVID-19. Many congregations are worshiping via live-stream, or by other electronic means. They are using old fashioned phone calls to talk to members, meetings and Bible study are taking place over Zoom. Food pantries are distributing food as cars drive by, homeless dinner programs are offering meals to go, and the prayers of the faithful ascend to a loving God whose arms bind us together even when we cannot be face to face. Since we cannot be WITH one another, let us nonetheless be FOR each other.

These are faithful decisions, made out of our understanding of the great commandments to love God and love our neighbor. In this present moment, among other things, loving our neighbor means not being physically present with our neighbors, to protect them and us from potential infection.

It is more challenging to be church in a time such as this. Our pastors and leaders are having to develop new skills, and our members are having to extend more effort to stay connected. There are financial implications of not gathering in person, and as long as this continues it will grow ever harder to continue our basic outreach ministries caring to the poor, the sick, migrants, and the elderly.

The word "quarantine" comes from *quaresima*, the Italian word for Lent. Ships were "quarantined" for 40 days in port before they were able to dock and unload people and supplies. So of all seasons of the year to be experiencing quarantines, this present season of Lent is very appropriate. Just as Lent ends with Easter, so this season of quarantine will end with renewed faith in our Risen Lord—though it will likely not happen by April 12, 2020. Over the next few weeks, as the situation develops, we will discern what the right way to observe calendar Easter is; and what the right way to observe our eventual return to in-person congregational life, proclaiming "Alleluia" with shouts of joy. That day will be an Easter Day indeed, celebrating the restoration of new life, having passed through the valley of the shadow of death.

We, the leaders of our respective Christian denominations, hold you in prayer just as we ask you to hold us in prayer in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Rev. Jay R. Hartley
Regional Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona

The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer
Bishop, Grand Canyon Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Robert T. Hoshibata
Resident Bishop
The Desert Southwest Conference
The United Methodist Church

Rev. Dr. William M. Lyons, Conference Minister
Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Brad Munroe
Presbytery Pastor for the Presbyteries of Grand Canyon and de Cristo
Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA)

The Right Rev. Jennifer A. Reddall
Sixth Bishop of Arizona
The Episcopal Church



For those who want to encourage individuals, couples or, especially, parents with children to be able to focus on faith while at home, the Family Worship, Family Faith devotional will be sent out weekly.

[March 22 Lesson](#)

COVID19 Correspondence can be found on the Presbytery website under "News and Events" and "Files-Clerk of Session"

www.presbyterydecristo.org

NOTE: All pastors and CREs will receive a weekly invitation to a PASTOR'S CHECK IN to be offered on Tuesdays at 3:00 p.m. and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. until further notice. All active pastors and CRE's will get an email with login information two days prior to each meeting. Email Carolyn McBurney by COB the day before if you do not receive it. pbymoffice@gmail.com

A prayer from our GA Moderators

Eternal God, sustainer, provider,
God of all wisdom and knowledge,
Our spirits are weary, our faith quivers,
our minds get clouded by news of sickness
and death.
You know our thoughts before we express
them,
even the fears we dismiss, you know them.
We cannot hide our feelings and worries from
you.
So, as we are, we come to you, O God, asking for wisdom,
for clear minds and open hearts, for calm
and assurance that, through the crisis, you are present.
Knowing that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness;
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,
but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words,"
We ask for wisdom and protection...
for medical personnel, scientists, doctors, nurses, and laboratory technicians;
for those around the world considering current and other health crises;
for health care personnel and caregivers.
We lift them up to You.
Bendíceles con sabiduría; protégeles de todo mal.
We ask for clear minds and open hearts as people navigate daily lives...
as closures, cancellations, and quarantines are enacted;
as families gather in their homes, some caring for those who are sick;
as we encounter neighbors in our neighborhoods, stores, and pharmacies.

Bendícenos con paciencia y creatividad, amor y entendimiento.
We pray for the sick, those who have lost or are at risk of losing jobs
in the midst of this crisis,
for those whose health or social services will be or have been affected,
for those suffering the direct effects of this virus, locally and around the world.
Illumine us, Holy Spirit.
Show us in what ways we can be of help as we care for self and others.
Ilumínanos para saber cómo ayudar.
We ask for calm, assurance, and strength.
May we all remember that, in the midst of any crisis,
your grace reaches us,
your hope enlightens us,
and your love surrounds us all.
En medio de la crisis,
tu gracia nos alcanza,
tu esperanza nos ilumina,
y tu amor nos rodea.
Amén.
(Vilmarie and Cindy, March 14, 2020)



The Board of Pensions decided effective immediately, COVID-19 testing will be considered preventive and will be reimbursed at 100% of the cost (no copays, no deductible.) This will apply to all three medical plans.
Additionally, for the PPO and EPO, co-pays for Telemedicine will be waived, regardless of diagnosis, through June 30. This does NOT apply to the HDHP plan.
I thought you might want to include this information in your next Presbytery newsletter. Anyone who has questions can call Philadelphia at 800 773-7752.



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

The PW Spring Gathering scheduled to be held at Immanuel PC in Tucson on April 18 has been cancelled.

To: LEST Registrants and staff
From: Brad Munroe

LEST training has been rescheduled for April 13-17 (the week after Easter). Thank you for understanding, and please put the rescheduled LEST on your calendars!
Blessings, Brad Munroe
[Click here for more info and to register](#)



Please keep the following in your prayers:

Virginia Studer, who has entered hospice. Cards may be



sent to Virginia Studer, c/o 2953 E Dover St, Mesa, AZ 85213. Please, no visitors without arranging with the family in advance.

All who are struggling to cope during the pandemic- Lord, hear our prayers

Upcoming Events

APRIL

13-17-LEST Rescheduled- [REGISTER](#)
25- Stated meeting of Presbytery, Southside- Pending

[THIS WEEK'S PCUSA NEWS](#)

[COVID- 19 Guidance from PDA](#)

[PC\(USA\) - Useful resources for churches during Social Distancing](#)

[Instructions for conducting Zoom Meetings](#)

[Board of Pensions](#)

[Presbyterians Today- Check out the new digital edition](#)

[ACTIVE SHOOTER PLAN FOR CHURCHES](#)

[From our Partners Companeros en Mision](#)

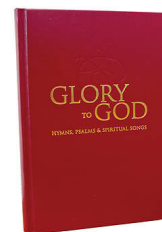
LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BY BRAD MUNROE

The Christian faith is a communal practice; no one can be an island for we belong to each other. The Christian faith is a family, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a unified body made of many parts, a Temple—the dwelling place of God—consisting of many bricks. All of these images are plural, for the Christian faith speaks of “all y’all” rather than merely about you and me. Nowhere is this more needed than during Lent, for when we journey to the Cross it is, by definition, a perilous journey. Join us in this Lenten journey.



[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

Need new PCUSA hymnals? One of our churches ordered too many red *Glory to God* hymnals and hopes to avoid the charges for sending them back. If you would like to buy any they are available for \$18 each. Presbyterian Publishing is willing to work with you on the price and the fee to transfer them to you. Contact Marla Edwards if you are interested. Marla Edwards (medwards@presbypub.com) 800-728-7228 x5323



Are you a new Clerk of Session? Did you know that your session records are supposed to be reviewed each year?

Lucky for you, we offer a Review of Records one hour prior to every Presbytery meeting where you can have that done and ask questions of experienced clerks who are there to help! Just register for the presbytery meeting and indicate that you are coming to records review. In the meantime, contact Carol

Gerlach of Mesa First (rlgclg6_6@hotmail.com) with any questions and check out the presbytery website for lots of important resources. And, of course, let the presbytery office know you are now the clerk so that you can be on the communications list to get timely updates.

Job Opportunities- New listing for Immanuel

Goods and Services-Christmas Tree

Visit our Website

Presbytery de Cristo |602-468-3820 | Fax- 602-468-3824 |pbyoffice@gmail.com |www.presbyterydecristo