



IMAGE: A contribution by the Losey family in Woodhull to the "Heart Hunters" social media global project to display hearts in windows during this physical distancing period.

GOOD NEWS

from the

Presbytery of Great Rivers

*We are called to share Christ's love by partnering in service,
uniting in worship, and risking in ministry.*

April 2, 2020

Consistent with federal guidelines, Illinois state authorities have issued shelter-in-place orders until May. All presbyters are urged to exercise all available protective measures to protect against contracting or transmitting the disease by staying at home as much as possible. If you or your congregation are experiencing any hardship, please let us know how we might be able to help. Resource links and updates can be found on our [website](#) and on the presbytery's [Facebook page](#).

This link continues to be regularly updated as the primary PCUSA resource list. <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>

Let Us Pray



Every week during 2020, we offer up different church names so that we can pray for our entire Presbyterian community. You are welcome to follow this calendar as you will! The full list can be found on our website under the Churches tab or by clicking [here](#).

This week on our prayer calendar. . .



East Moline - First

First Presbyterian Church
777 25th Ave, East Moline, IL 61244
Rev. Rebecca Sherwood
Karol Ellison, Administrative Assistant
Cathleen Runburg, Clerk of Session
Donald Buss, Treasurer

[Website](#)
[Facebook](#)



Edwards - Korean

Korean Presbyterian Church
7910 N. Ford Rd., Edwards, IL 61528
Rev. Hyaekwang Kim
Hyung K. Yoon, Clerk of Session
InSuk Kuk, Treasurer

[Website](#)
[Facebook](#)

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Forward to a Friend



(This will send this week's newsletter as an email to a friend!)

For Headline News
Happening Around
the PC(USA),
[click here](#)



Mark Your Calendar

APRIL

Office Closed

Friday April 10
Monday April 13

Committee on Ministry

Tuesday, April 28
10 am - 3 pm
Peoria-First Federated LTC

Administrative Team Meeting

Wednesday, April 29
11 am - 4 pm
Peoria-First Federated LTC

Leadership Team Meeting

Thursday, April 30
10 am - 2 pm
Peoria-First Federated LTC
Springfield-Third

In Our Prayers

We celebrate the birth of Rev. Kay Daniel's first grandchild: Rose Kimberly Daniel, born on March 31st at 8 pounds and 11 ounces! Her son James and daughter-in-law Cassie and their first daughter Rose are reported to be doing fine. Thanks be to God!



[Click here for the PGR Calendar](#)

Join Our List



ZOOM Teleconferencing Grants (NEW) and Coaching Grants

On April 1, 2020, the Leadership Team approved grants for churches for a one year subscription to ZOOM for teleconferencing. You may be reimbursed monthly for as long you need it up to a year, or be reimbursed for a single year. (Please note that *Techsoup*, an online marketplace for non-profit organizations, is offering Zoom subscriptions at nearly 50% off at this time!)

Also, a friendly reminder that on January 22, 2020, the Leadership Team approved grants of up to a limit of six sessions of professional coaching for Great Rivers Presbytery pastors serving congregations (including elders serving commissions, through the directory of the Presbyterian Coach Network, up to \$1,000.

Both of these are resources are available to help you navigate ministry during this pandemic crisis.

Summaries of Recent Federal Assistance Actions For Churches:

The following are summaries of the March 27th CARES Act 2020 (Coronavirus Relief and Economic Security Act) and Families First Coronavirus Response Act, containing federal assistance in response to the pandemic crisis, specifically as it relates to churches:

From Jean Hemphill, advisor to the Board of Pensions, asked by the Executives of the six agencies of the General Assembly and the President of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation to provide a resource to congregations and mid councils on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). (March 30, 2020):

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/cares_act_summary_33020.pdf



From Rev. Ray F. Montgomery, Executive Director of PACT (People Acting in Community Together) San Jose, a member of PICO CA & Faith in Action, courtesy of Joey Lee and the Presbytery of San Jose:

"CARES Act 2020 (Payment Protection Program) in a Nutshell:

- The CARES Act has allocated \$349B to the Paycheck Protection Program.

- The loans will be available to all 501(c)(3)'s on a first come first serve basis through your local bank if they are an SBA approved lender.
- Loans are based on 2.5 times average monthly payroll costs from 03/01/2019 - 02/29/2020.
- Forgiveness of loan amount will be based on the percentage of 02/15/2020 - 06/30/2020 FTE employees over 02/15/2019 - 06/30/2019.
- There will be no payments for the loan in 2020.
- Unforgiven loan amount will be paid over 10 years beginning in 2021.
- Interest rate is < 4%
- No collateral or personal guarantees will be required.
- No fees will be charged.
- Good faith certification required to certify that funds were used for payroll, mortgage, lease and utility payments.

Additional Benefits to Churches

- Expanded 2020 standard deduction for charitable contribution
- Business deduction for charitable contributions limits increased from 10% to 25%.
- Expanded unemployment benefits.

How to prepare for the loan application and loan forgiveness:

1. Create spreadsheet of payroll costs from 03/2019 - 02/2020. Include 1099 contract employees.
2. Get in touch with your banker IMMEDIATELY and specifically the SBA loan administrator for application details.
3. Calculate FTE's 02/15/2019 - 06/30/2019 and 02/15/2020 - 06/30/2019. (At June 30th- To determine loan forgiveness amount.)

From Mike Kirk, General Counsel PC(USA), on Families First Coronavirus Response Act - summary of new provisions related to temporary leave.

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-

[19/article_for_councils_and_congregations_re_families_first_coronavirus_response_act.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/article_for_councils_and_congregations_re_families_first_coronavirus_response_act.pdf)



From Clergy Advantage, Tax Specialists who work with Churches, based in Colorado, courtesy of Dee Cooper from Heartland Presbytery

<https://www.clergysupport.com/new-cares-act-ministers/>

From the Front-lines of a Pandemic: A Message from a Hospital Chaplain

"The calm before the storm", "Like a held breath", "Eerie". These are some of the ways my fellow mission partners at OSF have characterized the mood flowing through our halls, our nurses' stations, our hearts. We've all had to learn to do things differently. We Presbyterians have asked ourselves what worship looks like, what being the church looks like in our new normal. My patients are making peace with a hospital stay without visitors. Health care workers and those of us who support them have incorporated new little habits like taking our temperature before work into our daily routines. Bit by bit, we learn what life is, what we are, like now.



Within our worry for the future, our fear for our loved ones and the sometimes painful awkwardness of settling into new patterns, God is with us in beautiful ways. God is with us in the way we check in with one another. God is with us in the moments of inspiration when we touch on how to do something new, something better. Our Lord is also with us as we listen to those with new needs and old needs that cannot be met in the same way. That is part of why I'm writing you today. As churches and other institutions alter or limit their outreach in response to this pandemic, people in need around our community are wondering where they should go to get food and necessary supplies. Sometimes, they've come into our emergency department, seeking answers. Sisters and brothers, I'm asking for your help in finding these answers. Is your church or a church you know of still actively providing community support. What churches are providing food, supplies, even services such as counseling? I hope to build a map of what's available through the presbytery. I've asked the ecumenical staff of the pastoral care department at OSF Saint Frances Medical Center to reach out to their own denominations so we can have as complete a picture as possible. Thank you very much for your time and support.

Finally, how are you? How are your people, your family? How can I pray for you? Please know how deeply I appreciate you, my Presbyterian family. May God be with us all through this time of crises. May, no matter how hard or uncertain the road, we never forget we are God's beloved children.

Chip Roland, Hospital Chaplain and Validated Minister of Great Rivers Presbytery
OSF Saint Frances
voltage_farm@hotmail.com

Weekly Check-In for Those Leading Shelter-in-Place Ministry



For the last few weeks, members of Great Rivers Presbytery have participated in a conversational Zoom meeting with Lead Presbyter Ryan Landino about how we are tackling the emerging challenges of shelter-in-place ministry. How are you and your community managing? What's working, what isn't, what are you learning, what challenges are you encountering? This is a "care and share" space for suggestions, approaches, platforms, and best practices while celebrating, affirming, and encouraging each other in these new challenges. Come to share, listen, or take notes!

"Check-in And Best Practices for Shelter-in-Place Ministry"

Thursday, April 9, 1:00 pm

Click on this link to be taken to the meeting (smartphone users will need to download application first, desktop computers just follow the link and give permission to run)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/510542231>

10 Stewardship "Do's" During the Pandemic and One "Do NOT"



1. **Pray.** It's what we do. I won't belabor this point.

2. **Cut yourself some slack.** The last time leaders in the Church had to navigate post-Christendom, during a global pandemic is only right now. There's no rule book. Trying to lead a community, sustain its ministries financially, all the while experiencing and processing the pandemic, yourself is going to be tough. Rest and give yourself patience, mercy and grace.

3. **Talk with your session about being spiritual leaders at this time of crisis** A session isn't a non-profit board, and no time proves it quite like the present. *The pastor and the Elders are the spiritual leaders of the congregation.* Open up conversations with your session that engage, not just WHAT you will DO, but HOW you will be together. The session of the church might need to make difficult decisions in the near and long-terms, and the consistency and grace displayed by your session will help lead your congregation how ever long this crisis lasts. In the church, every tactical conversation is in relationship with God's story. Listen, together, for what is creating feelings of togetherness and common vision. It might be part of where God calls you next.

4. **Reach out to every member of your congregation.** Utilize church leadership past and present who will help reach out through whatever means you have at your disposal. Just check in. Announce that you will do this. Do it: Let each person know that you hold them in prayer, let them know how you are doing and that the church is continuing in ministries of worship, teaching and compassion. Tell people you did it: Celebrate in your communications when everyone has reported in and share joys and concerns as appropriate.

5. **Listen for the story:** Scripture. How are you hearing the story of the faith differently in light of this current crisis? Is this a moment where the wilderness stories are speaking loudly? Do you find yourself in new relationship to resurrection and deliverance narratives? Is this the time where you find yourself studying the psalms? The story of scripture and the Christian faith have endured through many challenges and shifts. Each time, the characters, stories, and truths have been seen through new lenses and with new insight. In a world lurching toward what comes after this crisis, whose story are you hearing, again, in new ways?

6. **Listen for your story:** How people are showing what they value in church. People. Listen deeply for what people hunger for in this time. Connections? Learning? Making sense of all this? The things people value might not be where church leaders have spent most of their time or where the budget has been directing financial and staff resources. To any degree possible, let things go that aren't serving your members true needs. Pick a later date to which of the now not-so-sacred-cows comes back.

7. **Make a mission commitment.** Churches are unique in that they both receive gifts and contribute gifts. Now is a good time to make a commitment of what you have toward those suffering in this pandemic. While many members and many community groups are scrambling and searching for ways to recover and to help, your congregation's call remains to be a place of refuge and hope for your members and also a place of help and healing for people experiencing needs. Tie your commitment to those who are suffering directly with your appeal to continuing relational and formation ministries that are essential at times of crisis and only provided by the church. While there is surely overlap, this also signal to the broader community that you intend to be a help in this time of need, rather than retracting. Part of this can be your commitment to participate in One Great Hour of Sharing. For over 70 years it has been the largest way Presbyterians have engaged in ministries with the most vulnerable. In addition, consider a local ministry doing direct service. Your members and your community need to know that you intend to be a place of spiritual help and compassion no matter what happens as a result of this crisis.

8. **Ask for Help.** One of the wonderful things that is coming out of this dry place, is the creativity and willingness of many church leaders and those who attend church on Sunday. Individuals are also sharing, freely, of what they have discovered, learned, or known all along. Asking for help might allow you time and space for other things you need to attend to, or permit you to really pursue a priority from the above.

9. **Let all members know, and especially your strongest financial supporters, know what you are planning and doing in terms of ministry and what you are seeing in terms of current financial support for the church.** This is less about resetting your priorities to reflect the wishes of big donors as much as it is ensuring your strongest and most faithful financial supporters hear things from you and can ask questions, provide advice, guidance, affirmations, and concerns with you. A short conversation on the front end might prevent drama that is the result of misunderstandings. No need to be shy about

inviting continued and increased support during this time. Many will feel called to be generous at this time of difficulty.

10. **Attend to all stewardship conversations as issues of discipleship.** Some people are experiencing illness, lost jobs, and lost income. Assure people who fear they won't be able to make their pledge or other commitments that they are loved, seen, and supported. We do know that times of crisis evoke increased giving. Give people, especially your strongest donors, an opportunity to step up their financial commitment and realize the joy of making a difference. This is why point 7 can be so important at this time.

One Do NOT.

1. **(Do not) Cut your budget.** The church, YOUR church exists for "such a time as this". Be the church. None of us know what all will shake out of this. While you might delay or forgo certain expenses at this time (Easter flowers for the sanctuary, for instance) cutting budgets and attempting to 'manage' this crisis will ultimately prove futile. Any conversations about the budget should be held in light of the above and not upon financial fears.

Responding to a Shortfall in Revenue During the Coronavirus Crisis

by Jon Moore, Mission Engagement Advisor, Presbytery Mission Agency, courtesy of Rosemary Mitchell, Senior Director for Mission Engagement and Support, PMA



If there is one thing we know about times of crisis, giving increases, sometimes exponentially. People want to help during times of great need; it makes them feel alive, fulfilled, that they are making a difference. That's why I am concerned when I hear that a number of our churches, in response to this crisis, are preemptively cutting expenses rather than giving their members an opportunity to increase their giving. By doing this, not only do we risk damaging the mission of the congregation, but we deny our members the opportunity to experience the joy of sacrificing for something larger than themselves.

I'm assuming that every one of our congregations has put in place an ongoing calling plan to keep in touch with members during this time. While email communication is a good way to disseminate information, it doesn't connect in the way that a pastoral call by phone does. These calls not only tell us how each member is doing physically, emotionally and psychically, but they also offer an opportunity to share how the congregation is doing, including sharing its financial situation.

The steps below, suggested by Gail Perry, one of the stewardship consultants I follow, suggests the following.

Create a short list of your strongest financial givers(they may not always be your biggest givers). These people are your true partners. They deeply believe in you and your work. They are committed to your mission and have demonstrated that commitment over and over. Clearly, they will want to know what is going on and how they can help.

- a. Reach out in a caring and compassionate way. You have a relationship with them. You want to know how THEY are doing.*
- b. Then acknowledge their partnership and how much you value it.*
- c. Ask for permission: "I wanted to share with you how things are going. Would you like to know the details?"*
- d. Be transparent. Share your status as honestly as you can.*
- e. Ask for the help that you really need. Tell them, frankly, what it will take to get through this.*
- f. You can say, "Is this something you'd be interested in helping with?" [1]*

It is times like the present that we are confronted by the fact that, "We are all in this together." It

will be remembered as a time when the Church united to take care of one another and the community around it. It is a time to invite people to live deeply into their faith and their commitment and experience the joy of making a difference for the Kingdom.

Don't cut back the mission of your congregation until you give people a chance to respond to your call for increased giving!

[1] www.gailperry.com/fundraising-action-plan-for-crisis-response

Looking for Alternative, Online Worship?

Here are several possibilities for connecting to different worship spaces around the presbytery. This is a listing of the last Sunday's offerings of different churches providing worship. Please check the presbytery's Facebook page (click [HERE](#)) for most up-to-date listing with direct links.

- Second Pres Bloomington, Rev. Trey Haddon, Rev. Elissa Bailey, 10am, streaming "drive-in-worship service" online, secondpres.com.
- St Luke Union Church, Bloomington, Rev. Andy Gifford, 10:30am on [Facebook](#) live.
- Buffalo Hart Presbyterian Church, Rev. Sarah Iliff-McGill, 9:30am Facebook live <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BufaloHartPC/>
- Chatham Presbyterian Church, Rev. Jim Reitz, by newsletter and email, to access, email jareitz@chathampresbyterian.com.
- First Presbyterian Church, Coal Valley and Beulah, Rev. Tim Snart, worship posted on Youtube https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCiqgUcXCqN_ftlk5EP8Odeg
- First Presbyterian Church of Delavan, Rev. Jean Sparks, found on their webpage firstpresdelavan.org or directly at <http://firstpresdelavan.org/virtual-worship>.
- First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, Rev. Andy Sonneborn, 10:30am by [Facebook](#) live.
- First Presbyterian Church Galesburg, Rev. Ann Elyse Van Winkle, 10am by [Facebook](#) live
- First Presbyterian Church Geneseo Rev. Tim Doty, 10:30 a.m. streaming brief worship service of Scripture, meditation and prayer to [Facebook](#) live.
- First Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville, IL, Rev. Jonathan Warren, 10am by [Facebook](#) live.
- First United Presbyterian Church of Leroy, Rev. Annie McMillan, recorded Youtube videos of their services posted later on their [Facebook](#) page.
- First Presbyterian Church of Lincoln, Illinois, Rev. Adam Quine, 10:00am by [Facebook](#) live (older recorded sermons also on church website)
- Sugar Tree Grove United Presbyterian Church, Faith United Presbyterian Church, Monmouth, and Monmouth College collaborating on joint 10:30am Sunday worship service, posted to Youtube: <https://m.youtube.com/user/monmouthcollege>
- New Windsor Presbyterian Church, Rev. Mark Bedford, worship videos and links shared by [Facebook](#)
- First Presbyterian Church of Normal IL, Rev. Matt Wilcox, 8:30am and 11am by livestream and saved upon ending: <https://livestream.com/firstpresnormal>
- The Norwood Presbyterian Church, Commissioned Pastor Gary Denise Pullen, 10:30am on [Facebook](#) live, on his personal page.
- United Presbyterian Church of Peoria, Rev. Debra Avery, 10 a.m.
 - their [Facebook](#) page
 - YouTube from any smartphone, computer, or tablet: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAf9XQ9MUHNGaXdQQRSk6yQ>
- First Federated Church of Peoria, Rev. Frosty Krummel, look for streaming and video on their

[Facebook](#)

- Westminster Presbyterian Church - Peoria Rev. Denise Clark-Jones, 10am, streaming online <https://westminsterpeoria.org/>
- Central Presbyterian Church, Petersburg, Commissioned Pastor Stephanie McCullough, worship posted on website <https://www.central-pres.org/worship>
- Gloria Dei Presbyterian Church RI, in Rock Island, Rev. Drew Nagle, 10:30am, by [Facebook](#) live, and posted afterwards.
- Good Shepherd, Rock Island, Rev. James Benson, sermons posted on website on Sundays, www.goodshepherdpres.org
- South Park Presbyterian Church, Rev. Blake Severson, worship shared by YouTube, https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCWRlYrkt6ZkaejzWVAj_yDQ
- First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Illinois, Rev. Susan Phillips, 10:30 via Zoom, click this link: <https://zoom.us/j/395770581>
- Hope Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Rev. Chuck Goodman, 9:30am by [Facebook](#) live
- [Korean United Presbyterian Church of Springfield](#) Rev. Jaechul Kim, streaming by Youtube live (Korean language) [Facebook](#) page.
- Third-Presbyterian Church of Springfield, worship recorded and posted later on Sunday to [Facebook](#).
- Westminster Presbyterian Church of Springfield, IL, Rev. Blythe Kieffer, Rev. Trajan McGill, Rev. Christian Choi, 10am worship streamed online, www.wpcspi.org
- United Church of Woodhull, Rev. Cheyanna Losey, recorded Youtube videos of their services posted on [Facebook](#) page.

Here is a link to the lectionary readings for today:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/.../revised-co.../2020/3/15/>

FRIENDLY REMINDER TO NOT FORGET TO MAKE SPACE FOR THE SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF GIVING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS!

"Hey, Can We Do Communion Online?" YES!

Click [HERE](#) for an article, "Virtual Communion: Church leaders say it can be done" *Office of the General Assembly issues advisory opinion on holding communion during emergency/pandemic*, by Rick Jones, OGA, 3/25/20

Click [HERE](#) for the full original text of the Advisory Opinion of the Office of the General Assembly.

Get Connected!

There are three primary ways we as a presbytery are able to keep in touch with new resources and information during the pandemic: our weekly newsletter which goes out Thursday or Friday, our Facebook page, and our website. Please make sure you are connected!

Be sure to encourage your congregations, sessions, and even your church newsletter editorial staff and volunteers to be sure to sign up for our presbytery newsletter and follow our Facebook page so you don't miss out on what is going on in our community of churches!

Have you liked our "Presbytery of Great Rivers" Facebook page?



Have you signed up for our "Good News from Great Rivers" email newsletter?

