

**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.*

May 28, 2020

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*At this time, according to the plan to [Restore Illinois](#), it looks like we may be soon about to transition from "Phase Two--Flattening" to "Phase Three--Recovery", which would still limit in-person, indoor gatherings to fewer than ten ([here](#) is a news article that serves as a short primer on the four phases of reopening Illinois). The governor has encouraged alternate means of worship, including virtual, drive-through, or outdoor worship (with masks and social distancing). In the meantime, please see the [5/19 Statement on COVID-19](#) from the Leadership Team for some considerations. If you or your congregation are experiencing any hardship as we endure this pandemic, please let us know how we might be able to help. Continue to check <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/> for a list of most up-to-date for resources leading the church through this time!*

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Our newsletter will be taking a break until later in June. If you have questions please contact our Executive Office Administrator Patti Parrish at [pparrish@greatriverspby.org](mailto:pparrish@greatriverspby.org)

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## Let Us Pray



Every week during 2020, we offer up different church names so that we can pray for our entire Presbytery 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. . .*



### **Lincoln, First**

First Presbyterian Church  
301 Pekin St, Lincoln, IL 62656  
Rev. Adam Quine  
Janis Klockenga, Admin Assistant  
Diane Osborn, Clerk of Session  
Melody Anderson, Treasurer  
[Website](#)  
[Facebook](#)



### **Macomb, First**

First Presbyterian Church  
400 E Carroll St, Macomb, IL 61455  
Rev. Erin Marth  
Melissa Calhoun, Admin Assistant  
Jim Caldwell, Clerk of Session  
Jeanne Stierman, Treasurer

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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

**MAY**

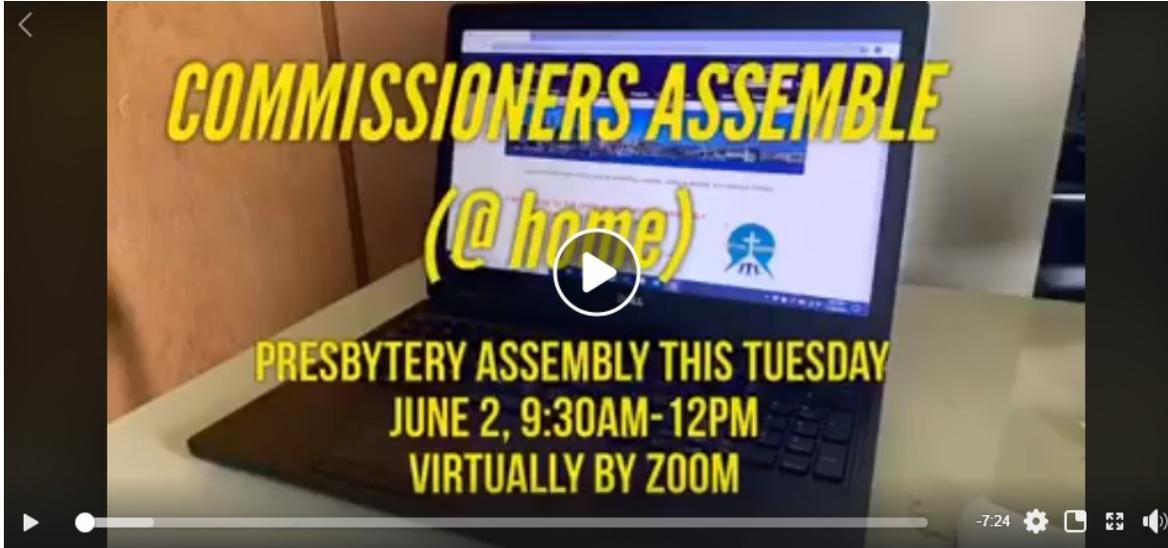
**COM Meeting**  
Tuesday, May 19  
10 am - 2 pm  
ZOOM only

[Click here for the PGR Calendar](#)

Join Our List



## **FOR PRESBYTERY COMMISSIONERS: Invitation to June 2nd Presbytery Assembly (virtually from home)**



Click [HERE](#) to access video instructions on how to get to the meeting.

Click [HERE](#) for **RSVP and MEETING links** document so you can access the meeting.

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### **Assembly Notice**

*In compliance with Robert's Rules of Order and our bylaws, our June 2 assembly will be conducted virtually, which means you will be able to access the meeting by internet device or telephone. Our time will be limited to core business items and discipleship building. We request that there be only one voting participant per device so that we may tally votes accurately.*



### **Presbytery of Great Rivers Assembly Notice**

**Tuesday, June 2, 2020 (Virtual Assembly via Zoom)  
Call to Order 10:00 a.m  
Site opens at 9:30 a.m**

*"Fellow ministry leaders,*

*As Great Rivers Presbytery prepares to hold our first virtual assembly gathering on June 2, we are asking that you help in ensuring the process and business of our gathering is as faithful and fruitful as possible. The registration process we have utilized in the past must change as we pivot to this virtual forum for our assembly gathering. In order to ensure that we are able to recognize and validate every individual with us, as well as ensure the necessary quorum, we are asking that ALL MINISTRY LEADERS FROM ALL CHURCHES WITHIN GREAT RIVERS PRESBYTERY click the link in the document below to register you and other participants from your church for the assembly gathering on June 2, 2020. Thank you!"*

*~Matt Wilcox and Christian Choi*

## **ACCESS RSVP AND MEETING LINKS BY CLICKING [HERE](#)**

### Preliminary Meeting Highlights:

- Greetings from the Co-Moderator of the 223rd PCUSA Rev. Cindy Kohlmann!
- Clerk's report - item requiring assembly notification
- Mid-pandemic spiritual reflection and discipleship time, led by Lead Presbyter Rev. Ryan Landino
- Nominations of new volunteer members to the work of the presbytery
- Approval of extending officer term limits for select churches
- Adding members to the Administrative Commission to finalize the ministry of Nauvoo-First
- Commissioning of General Assembly Commissioners and Delegates to the 224<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the first virtual PC(USA) General Assembly

*Meeting will conclude by noon.*

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### **[A Statement on COVID-19 from the Leadership Team of Great Rivers Presbytery \(issued May 19, 2020\)](#)**

"We celebrate how seriously the community of churches of Presbytery of Great Rivers has practiced safe distancing and alternate means of ministry as we continue to endure this pandemic. That, at the time of this statement, we have had no reports of infections of the coronavirus within our congregations tells us that our combined efforts to limit the spread of the disease is working, and we see your diligence to boldly refuse to be transmission vectors for the disease for the sake of our communities. As we now cross the threshold of two months of sheltering in place, reopening has become a hot topic in our national dialogue. Let us remind ourselves in good faith that our operation is different than the many services at the center of our cultural debates, for our primary trade is not in goods and services, but rather in relationships and community. As such, churches have unique practices of proximity, sharing, and communicating that makes the easy transference of disease a much different challenge than other sectors.

While the decision on how, when, and where to conduct worship remains the faithful discernment of the local session, the Leadership Team of Great Rivers Presbytery encourages everyone to:

- Abide by the CDC's, the governor's, and local health department's orders and recommendations for in-person gatherings, as well as the guidance of your insurance company.
- Exemplify leadership in containing this disease to an anxious culture struggling to endure today's challenges.
- Articulate clear and (literally) healthy boundaries for ourselves and our elderly and vulnerable populations.
- Facilitate open, loving dialogue with employed staff and pastoral leaders that prioritizes their needs with compassion and safety. (While there are many who may welcome the opportunity to return to office spaces, remember too that we have many pastors and staff who are susceptible to the disease that may not feel safe returning sooner than others).
- Center our theology of interconnection and community care, how we are ONE BODY with many parts, seeking to safeguard the health of the entire body.
- Exercise grace for each other and ourselves to adjust plans in response to changing circumstances, including changing our own minds when necessary, knowing that providing safe space for others to listen and to speak is at the heart of our theology of discernment.
- Encourage patience with and self-care for pastors and church leaders experiencing work fatigue (see 5/7/20 blog post by our Lead Presbyter on "[Top Ten Reasons Why Your Pastor Needs A Break](#)," and three minute pastoral video by our PC(USA) Stated Clerk on "[Practicing Self-Care During COVID-19](#)" posted to Spirit of GA on Facebook, 5/18/20).
- Be anchored in the Word of God and its responsible application, making space for healthy lament consistent with the Biblical tradition of the Wisdom Literature of Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Lamentations.
- Be affirmed that you have permission to continue suspending in-person gatherings; may we challenge ourselves to be blameless in our responsibility to each other.
- Continue being creative in making adaptive accommodations for the safe pursuit of God's mission in your context, centered in the Great Commandment to love God and neighbor. One does not need a church building in order to build the church!

Even as we face challenges we have never imagined, we trust the Scriptures that God is with us in exile and wilderness, in crucifixion and resurrection, in death and in life.

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God... We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another... Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor."  
Romans 12:2a,5,10*

The Leadership Team of Great Rivers Presbytery:

Rev. Elissa Bailey, Stated Clerk of Great Rivers Presbytery, Second Presbyterian Church of Bloomington

Elder Julio Garcia, First Presbyterian Church of Milan

Rev. Ryan Landino, Lead Presbyter for Transformation of Great Rivers Presbytery

Elder Diane Ludington, Moderator-Elect of Great Rivers Presbytery, Commissioned Pastor of Warsaw Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Keokuk

Rev. Maura McGrath Nagle, Moderator of Great Rivers Presbytery, Rio Presbyterian Church and Sunbeam Presbyterian Church

Elder Bill Strawbridge, Treasurer of Great Rivers Presbytery, Washington Presbyterian Church

Elder Gary Terpstra, Hope Presbyterian Church of Springfield

Rev. Ann Elyse Van Winkle, First Presbyterian Church of Galesburg

Rev. Jonathan Warren, First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville

Elder Kathie Whitson, Commissioned Pastor of United Presbyterian Church of Biggsville

Rev. Matt Wilcox, First Presbyterian Church of Normal"

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**[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 let us know if there have been any changes so we can keep our list updated!*

- Alexis-Norwood Presbyterian Church, Commissioned Pastor Gary Denise Pullen, 10:30 am on [Facebook](#) live, on his personal page.
- Bloomington-Second Presbyterian Church, Rev. Trey Haddon, Rev. Elissa Bailey, 10 am, streaming "drive-in-worship service" online, [secondpres.com](http://secondpres.com).
- Bloomington-St Luke Union Church, Rev. Andy Gifford, 10:30 am on [Facebook](#) live. Buffalo Hart-Buffalo Hart Presbyterian Church, Rev. Sarah Ilyff-McGill, 9:30 am, via [www.buffalohartpc.com](http://www.buffalohartpc.com)
- Chatham-Chatham Presbyterian Church, Rev. Jim Reitz, by newsletter and email, to access, email [jareitz@chathampresbyterian.com](mailto:jareitz@chathampresbyterian.com)

- Coal Valley-First Presbyterian Church, Coal Valley and Beulah, Rev. Tim Snart, worship posted on YouTube [https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCiqgUcXCqN\\_ftIk5EP8Odeg](https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCiqgUcXCqN_ftIk5EP8Odeg)
- Delavan-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Jean Sparks, found on their webpage [firstpresdelavan.org](http://firstpresdelavan.org) or directly at <http://firstpresdelavan.org/virtual-worship>.
- East Moline- Presbyterian Church is posting pre-recorded services on YouTube and can be found here [www.youtube.com/channel/UCo0q4ViGTm1-qHYv02Ubbqw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo0q4ViGTm1-qHYv02Ubbqw)
- Elmwood-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Marla Bauler, worship led by Zoom (link can be obtained by pastor), then posted afterwards to [Facebook](#).
- Farmington-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Andy Sonneborn, 10:30 am by [Facebook](#) live.
- Galesburg-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Ann Elyse Van Winkle, 10 am by [Facebook](#) live
- Geneseo-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Tim Doty, 10:30 a.m. streaming brief worship service of Scripture, meditation and prayer to [Facebook](#) live
- Jacksonville-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Jonathan Warren, 10 am by [Facebook](#) live.
- Leroy-First United Presbyterian Church, Rev. Annie McMillan, recorded YouTube videos of their services posted later on their [Facebook](#) page.
- Lincoln-First Presbyterian Church of Lincoln, Rev. Adam Quine, 10:00 am by [Facebook](#) live (older recorded sermons also on church website)
- Monmouth-Sugar Tree Grove United Presbyterian Church, Faith United Presbyterian Church, Monmouth, and Monmouth College collaborating on joint 10:30 am Sunday worship service, posted to Youtube: <https://m.youtube.com/user/monmouthcollege>
- New Windsor-New Windsor Presbyterian Church, Rev. Mark Bedford, worship videos and links shared by [Facebook](#)
- Normal-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Matt Wilcox, 10:00 am by livestream and saved upon ending: <https://livestream.com/firstpresnormal>
- Peoria-First Federated Church, Rev. Frosty Krummel, look for streaming and video on their [Facebook](#)
- Peoria-United Presbyterian Church, Rev. Debra Avery, 10 a.m.
  - their [Facebook](#) page
  - YouTube from any smartphone, computer, or tablet: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAf9XQ9MUHNGaXdQQRSk6yQ>
- Peoria-Westminster Presbyterian - Peoria Rev. Denise Clark-Jones, 10 am, streaming online <https://westminsterpeoria.org/>
- Petersburg-Central Presbyterian Church, Commissioned Pastor Stephanie McCullough, worship posted on website <https://www.central-pres.org/worship>
- Reynolds-Hamlet Perryton is posting pre-recorded services since Easter weekend. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJY95CjdOLr4Vs1bzK0SX3g>
- Rio-Rio Presbyterian Church, Rio (and Sunbeam Presbyterian Church of Aledo), Rev. Maura McGrath-Nagle, 9:00 am by [Facebook](#) live.
- Rock Island-Gloria Dei Presbyterian Church, Rev. Drew Nagle, 10:30 am, by [Facebook](#) live, and posted afterwards.
- Rock Island-Good Shepherd, Rev. James Benson, sermons posted on website on Sundays, [www.goodshepherdpres.org](http://www.goodshepherdpres.org)
- Rock Island-South Park Presbyterian Church, Rev. Blake Severson, worship shared by YouTube, [https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCWRIYrkt6ZkaejzWVAj\\_yDQ](https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCWRIYrkt6ZkaejzWVAj_yDQ)
- Springfield-First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Susan Phillips, [www.LincolnsChurch.org](http://www.LincolnsChurch.org) has links for Sunday 10:30 live worship and Wednesday 5:30 service.
- Springfield-Hope Presbyterian Church, Rev. Chuck Goodman, 9:30 am by [Facebook](#) live

- Springfield-[Korean United Presbyterian Church of Springfield](#) Rev. Jaechul Kim, streaming by YouTube live (Korean language) [Facebook](#) page.
- Springfield-Third-Presbyterian Church, worship recorded and posted later on Sunday to [Facebook](#).
- Springfield-Westminster Presbyterian Church, Rev. Blythe Kieffer, Rev. Trajan McGill, Rev. Christian Choi, 10 am worship streamed online, [www.wpcspi.org](http://www.wpcspi.org)
- Woodhull-United Church, Rev. Cheyanna Losey, recorded YouTube videos of their services posted on [Facebook](#) page.

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

## 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?



Presbytery of Great Rivers, 3601 N Sheridan Rd, Peoria, IL 61604

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