

March 18, 2020

Dear friends,

For the foreseeable future, consider this to be your weekly update of resources and information regarding our churches' response to the Coronavirus and hopefully, some guidance and an offering of prayer and support.

First, a general temperature gauge here indicates that many of you have taken action on your own and I applaud the thoughtful, prayerful leadership that I have already seen demonstrated within this Presbytery. It is truly an inspiration. There are stories of generosity (ask Covenant Presbyterian, Wichita, about the offer from Panera to fill their food pantry with end of day breads), stories of surprising new ways of worship and stories of other modes of adapting church gatherings so that we remain the body of Christ, but also heed wisdom and advice from governmental and health officials.

Secondly, many of you have provided specific information about alternative ways of gathering and your decisions to suspend activities for various periods of time. In some ways, this might all be easier if we had an exact timeline on this, but alas, we do not.

Third, our meetings here at the Presbytery office have also altered practices. This week Trustees will conduct business mostly through email communication. Next week our PCT will meet via Zoom conference (thanks! Catherine Neelly Burton) and we will discuss our plans for the May meeting. At this point, my advice would be to always check first before making plans to be somewhere. Already my two training events for new executives, through the General Assembly have been either cancelled or postponed. Hold onto plans lightly and we will keep you posted as the days and patterns unfold.

Fourth, transitional ministry training and experience in churches in this work, has taught me that so much of what we do is not actually urgent, essential or even critical to the mission of God or the salvation of the people of God (I did not imply it is not important). Much of what we do and think is urgent, is NOT about our primary mission which is to be with others and remind them that in life and in death, we BELONG to God. Let us give each other, our pastors, our leaders and all in our world who are working on this, the space and grace to do the best they and we know how, in difficult and trying times. I am attaching a few articles and resources that may be helpful to some of you as you continue to make your own decisions day by day, hour by hour.

Finally, for right now, the PSK office is still open. Jan, Rachel and I are more than six feet apart at all times. I wash dishes and wipe down surfaces and wash my hands and do not breathe on anyone. However, as news of all schools closing until the end of the term, this practice may also change. Nonetheless, my phone is on and you can text, call or email me any time (really!) and if I do not answer I will get back to you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Recall these words of Scripture and be encouraged (Matthew 6:33-34, Peterson's The Message):

Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.

Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.

In faith and in hope,

Rev. Gail Doering

Transitional Executive Leader, PSK

Links to resources:

Online decision making in the PCUSA:

[https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/final_edited_advisory_opinion_church_in_an_emergency_or_pandemic_\(002\).pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/final_edited_advisory_opinion_church_in_an_emergency_or_pandemic_(002).pdf)

Wisdom regarding social or physical distancing:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/03/coronavirus-what-does-social-distancing-mean/607927/>

other resources and sample announcements:

from our own office of the Stated Clerk of the PCUSA - <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>

from a denominational cousin - <https://www.ucc.org/coronavirus>

from Presbyterian Foundation:

http://www.presbyterianfoundation.org/information-and-resources-on-covid-19/?fbclid=IwAR3gQ3Mo3GnmWVvFJJ3AjUINBd0nhcs5wx3hthsneNsqxGzasN_q84q-Ao4

[Preview attachment The Movable](https://www.uccorg/coronavirus) <https://www.uccorg/coronavirus>



[The Movable Feast.docx](#)

[25 KB](#)

--

Rev. Gail Doering