



Pine Street Presbyterian Church in the City of Harrisburg

Dear Members and Friends:

As we travel together through the corona crisis, I will frequently write you to provide updates. Things change swiftly. What was previously said in an e-mail may change in light of new circumstances, so please check your e-mails daily. We find this is the best way to communicate with you. Here is the latest.

Worship and the Building

Since last week's e-mail, the government has contemplated different recommendations concerning group assemblies and meetings. On Monday, the governor ordered all non-essential businesses closed for two weeks. I am mulling over what that implies for worship beyond that period. So far, your Session has decided to close the building through Sunday, March 29. That decision, however, may soon be revisited. In light of the possibility of the building's closure on Easter, **we will not take lily orders**. If the building is open on Easter Sunday, we will have some lilies available.

Our first livestream-only service was a success. Ninety-five computers accessed the service, and, according to George Kunkle's magical formula, we estimate 142 people watched. Very good, Pine Streeters! We are connected!

This Sunday our Parish Associate, the Rev. Heather Sigler, will preach. Her sermon is entitled "Life Redefined: Seeing Differently." The scripture readings for the morning are 1 Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5:8-14, and John 9:1-17. The opening voluntary is a variation of the hymn, "The King of Love My Shepherd Is," arranged by Dan Forrest. Tenor Timothy Lupia will sing "Thou Art God," written by Lionel Bourne. The closing voluntary will be a variation of the hymn, "The Church's One Foundation," arranged by Mark Hayes. A modified bulletin will be on the website. Join us via livestream this Sunday.

Your Financial Contributions

Please maintain your giving to the church during this period. Pine Street still has financial obligations. Your faithful giving serves the mission to which God has called us. Many, many thanks for your continued support and stewardship!

Pastoral Care

Hospitals are limiting visits. Heather Sigler and I will not be visiting the hospitals. If you are hospitalized and well enough to receive a call, we will telephone you. Continue to inform the church when you go into the hospital or have any procedures.

Staff and the Building During the Week

Do not come downtown to the building. Staff will be there for limited periods, processing mail and essential business. If you have a need or want to contact us, call and leave a message. We check them frequently.

Downtown Daily Bread

We continue to allow clients limited access to our building for the purposes of taking showers, picking up mail, and retrieving belongings from lockers. We have extra staff on-hand to inquire as to the health of the clients before entry, as well as to disinfect lockers and showers. The Dauphin County Library is closed, as is Strawberry Square, so there are not many options for the homeless. This morning, our outreach counselor brought supplies to several city areas where homeless people congregate. Some clients who picked up breakfast this morning were cold and frustrated. AA meetings have been cancelled until at least March 30.

The Adult Learning Center

The Adult Learning Center will not have classes until at least March 30.

As we travel through Lent, towards cross and resurrection, the story we hear in our Scriptures is of a God who has joined and brought us through “many dangers, toils, and snares.” Throughout history God’s people have endured many challenges to faith and life, but underneath us are the Everlasting Arms. We are not forgotten, and somehow that knowledge gives us courage to press on, face challenges, and share compassion with our fellow travelers in life. Last week’s reading from Paul the Apostle’s Letter to the Romans had these words: “Endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” (Romans 5:4-5) With God’s love firmly planted in our hearts, we are the people God wants us to be, and we will endure, giving hope to all. Draw strength from that promise, and be not afraid! This is the time to be God’s people. Your staff loves you and is here to serve you in any way we can.

Grace, peace, and love,

Russell