

July 2020

Presbyterian Church of the Covenant



COVENANT

Inclusive, Open-Minded and Home for Your Soul.

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Sunday Morning Schedule

11:00am Live Stream on PCoC's Facebook page (see page 4)

Important Dates ...

PLEASE NOTE : The church will remain closed for the foreseeable future, most probably all of the month of July, due to the ongoing health crisis.

We will notify the congregation via email and via posts on the church's website and Facebook page of the status of operations on an ongoing basis.

Rev. Sandlin and the church office manager, Kate Baird, will both work from home during this time and are available for emails and phone calls.

We hope to see you all again very soon; in the meantime, stay home, wash your hands, and love one another!

Happy Independence Day!



A Congregational Letter from Rev. Sandlin

Dear PCoC Family,

It seems we spend every month thinking that we'll see improvements on the rate of COVID-19 infections by the next month, and then we don't. For those of us itching to be back together again in person with our spiritual family, it is beyond frustrating. At least, I know it is for me.

At the same time, your Session and I are following the numbers and the recommendations of the experts very closely. Considering the very high percentage of at-risk members in our congregation, not gathering is the right thing to do and probably will be for a while to come.

All of that is why putting together our COVID Response Team is so important. At some point, the Session will decide it is safe for us to be back together – not just some of us, but all of us. When that happens, we need to be ready.

After reviewing the advice of health experts, the COVID Response Team will put together a best practices plan on how we should conduct ourselves and what safety precautions we need to put into practice. They will present their recommendations to the Session and then aid the Session in implementing them.

Having this plan ready to go is essential for the Session to be able to make the decision to reopen our building. Mind you, reopening is probably not happening very soon, but it can't be fully considered until we have a plan in place on how we protect the wellbeing of our members.

That said, we currently have four volunteers for the team. That just isn't enough to get the work done. If you have a background in a health-related business or recognize the seriousness of this issue and have kept up with the latest studies and findings, we really need you aiding this committee. Please consider volunteering for it. Just contact the church office or email me at markpcoc@gmail.com.

Stay safe out there! Stay home, if you can. Wear a mask when you do go out. Wash your hands. And love one another.

PEACE

COVID-19 Response Team

PCoC needs you to help us form a COVID-19 Response Team to help us all cope with this pandemic. Rev. Sandlin and the Session created this plan at the June Session meeting and we need volunteers to serve on the team. Help us plan for the many aspects of dealing with this illness, from thinking about how we move forward positively as a congregation, how we further expand or extend online meetings and communications, formulate plans to clean and sanitize the building, determining when it will be safe to meet in person again, and much more. Please email either Rev. Mark Sandlin at: markpcoc@gmail.com or the church office at: pcoc2010@gmail.com

Church Office Hours

Rev. Mark Sandlin and Kate Baird will work from home in July. Kate is in the church office on Mondays and Fridays and other days as needed. Please email the office before coming .

Monthly Work Day

Work day is still on hold until further notice, but many thanks to Clara Kelly, Barbara North, Nancy Schaefer, Lem Cox and any other volunteers who continue to keep our grounds beautiful!

Higher Ground Breakfast

This event is canceled for the month of July.

Weekly Wednesday Night Supper

Dinners will not be held this month. We're looking forward to future get-togethers!

In*Spire Meditation Each Tuesday

In*Spire Meditation is meeting online for the month of July

Session Meeting Minutes, June 9, 2020

OLD BUSINESS

- Tenant rents: now up to date.
- Building closure: building still closed, and Session members agreed that it should continue to be closed. Will discuss this issue again in July Session meeting. **Decision:** other than those taking care of business, building will remain closed to groups.
- First service after church re-opens will not be Easter, format will be decided later.
- Strategic Planning: Don still awaiting responses from all Session members on the different materials he sent; members were reminded to respond. He wants to have all responses completed so there will be ideas available when the Session is able to meet in person to discuss a plan.
- Parking fees were discussed and a decision reached on handling potential refund requests.

NEW BUSINESS

- COVID Response Team: Mark said PCoC needs a team that will consider how the church will resume activities when restrictions are lifted. Mark has weekly meetings with other pastors in this regard who are thinking of ways to meet this need. Mark will contact the congregation seeking potential team members.
- Zoom: it was decided to keep the Session meeting a telephone conference.
- Church workdays: work can be done outside only, with proper distancing; if the bathroom is needed, a person will be designated to clean up.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Resource: Tom. Nancy sent a financial report to all Session members. Salem Presbytery has offered dues relief to churches for 3 months; we have received this relief, which will save us about \$2,000 a month for May, June, July. Other savings have resulted from not having church services, so money saved on utilities and personnel.

Worship: Mark. Has been able to refine visual, audio, in his Zoom narrowcasts and is working to add music.

Spiritual Formation: Marcia. Currently only one study group, meets on Zoom.

Building & Grounds: Don. Structural Subcommittee: Mark Cable has found no leaks in pipes. Lem and Clara continue work on the grounds. Discussion about responsibilities of PCoC and Ukirk for trimming and mowing at Holderness House.

Engineering Subcommittee: will be chaired by Mark Cable. There are ongoing problems with HVAC and with other parts to the buildings. Don is obtaining repair estimates; current estimates for repairs needed throughout building exceeds several hundred thousand dollars.

Interior: Barbara. No report, spaces not currently utilized.

Communications: Tom. Website has been revised. Mark is researching local broadcast transmitters so services could be held in the parking lot with members in their cars.

Fellowship: Ralph. No report

Outreach: Ann. No report.

Personnel: Ralph. Telephone tree working well, but need more volunteers so more members can be reached. Emails requesting volunteers have been sent. Working on a procedure to recognize members' birthdays; Kate has created a birthday list.

Congregational care: Jane is working on this.

Planned Presbytery meeting to be held at PCoC in November is cancelled.

David Johnson, Clerk of The Session

Join us Online for Services and Fellowship

On Sundays at 11:00am, Rev. Sandlin's Sunday message is broadcast live at these sites:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86895217729> (Zoom webinar)
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCar8ZVg434DF1uTtL86JEhg> (YouTube)
<https://www.facebook.com/PCoC.GSO/>
<https://www.facebook.com/revmarksandlin>
<https://www.facebook.com/marksandlin>
<https://www.facebook.com/TheChristianLeft>
<https://www.facebook.com/christiansmisrepresented>
<https://www.facebook.com/thegodarticle>

Thursdays at 3:00pm Rev. Sandlin does a live Facebook broadcast called "Question Mark." It begins with a devotion, then he answers three questions on a variety of topics, and concludes with a prayer. Submit your questions on Facebook or email them to MarkPCoC@gmail.com. The live broadcast is on the church's Facebook page, on Rev. Sandlin's writer page on Facebook, and on his personal Facebook page. Here's the links to those pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/PCoC.GSO/>
<https://www.facebook.com/revmarksandlin>
<https://www.facebook.com/marksandlin>

Black Lives Matter

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Check us out online!
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