



*May 7, 2020*

## Presbytery News

### **Homestead Presbytery Guidance – May 7, 2020** **Regarding Resuming In-Person Activities of Churches in the Days of COVID-19**

The Leadership Team\* of Homestead Presbytery after much prayer and consideration continues to recommend the following guidance:

***That no in-person worship or church gatherings take place until there is additional guidance from the CDC, medical community, government, and health officials that demonstrate Nebraska has reached the gating criteria, to be met prior to beginning Phase 1, of the CDC document "Opening Up America Again."***

Several churches in Homestead Presbytery have already made the commitment to wait to gather physically in one place until at least Pentecost Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> if appropriate, and guidelines/mandates allow. While it is the decision of each session about when to resume in person worship again:

***We recommend that all congregations in Homestead Presbytery make this same commitment.***

As always, our concern is for the health and well being of our pastors, congregations, members, friends and the most vulnerable among us. Our commitment to serve our communities together as instruments of God's love and grace, especially during these days, continues to discover new avenues to build up God's creation and not tear it down. Our hope is that together we will grow stronger, more connected and open to change, better listeners to the needs around us, and ready to embrace the future to which God is calling us.

**As a church leader, you are strongly recommended to become familiar with the following documents/links in consideration of when it is appropriate to gather**

together in the same physical space as the church.

### Opening Up America Again

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>

### Returning to Public Worship - Theological and Practical Considerations

[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning\\_to\\_public\\_worship\\_may\\_2020.pdf?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=Daily+Coronavirus+briefing+and+News+from+the+Presbyterian+Church+%28U+S+A%29&utm\\_campaign=Covid-19-daily+news+-+May+06%2C+2020](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning_to_public_worship_may_2020.pdf?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Daily+Coronavirus+briefing+and+News+from+the+Presbyterian+Church+%28U+S+A%29&utm_campaign=Covid-19-daily+news+-+May+06%2C+2020)

### RETURNING TO CHURCH – Ministry during the COVID-19 outbreak Wisconsin Council of Churches

<https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church/>

### 24 Questions Your Church Should Answer Before People Return

<https://kenbraddy.com/2020/04/18/20-questions-your-church-should-answer-before-people-return/?fbclid=IwAR0ibnVAjEw5JSoJFm9GjM9be50-s3liwIHmX0tNXICWXUgTtcxy2fTMSDY>

I highly recommend for those church leaders who would like to explore ***an approach to adaptive change during a crisis*** the following attachment. It is a short piece by Jim Kitchens & Deborah Wright of PneuMatrix, a Presbyterian rooted Church Consulting Firm, based on the work of leadership scholar Ronald Heifetz. It interprets and clarifies adaptive change as it applies to churches today. Read it and let me know what you think. [Adaptive Change During a Crisis - Kairos Time!](#)

Thank you for your continued prayers, words of encouragement, simple gifts, creative new ways, your service.

Stephen Earl  
Interim Executive Presbyter

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## From the Church Vitality Committee

Wow, is it hard for you to believe that it's May also? Even more, am I the only one who finds it hard to believe that it's still 2020? It seems like the last month has lasted a year! I would guess it has felt the same for many in our communities, as people are getting more and more eager to return to "life as it was" and restrictions are being lifted. Although we are "so over this pandemic," there are still many questions and dynamics we have to answer before returning to in-person ministries for our church or gathering with other groups. And those dynamics can get complicated.

In this time, our committee is trying to support you in whatever ways we can; including writing these brief messages of hope and love each week. At this time of searching for answers, our offering to you is the prayer commonly known as the "Serenity Prayer" by Reihold Niebuhr, "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot

change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” We are praying some sort of version of this for each of you: that you will be able to discern what is God’s will in the midst of all the other wills and anxieties that surround you. We believe that God is speaking to all of us, telling us how to best love and care for the health and needs of others in this unique time. We look forward to hearing how you are discerning God communicating with you in this time, as we will share with you what God is communicating to us.

We are in this together,

Zac Wolfe

New Worshiping Communities and Church Vitality Committee Moderator  
First Presbyterian Church, Beatrice, NE



## Presbytery ASSEMBLY

In these times of social distancing, we have decided that for the safety of everyone, the **May 21st Stated Meeting will be conducted via Zoom.**

We will be having a walk through/tutorial on Monday, May 18th at 1pm. of some of the Zoom features you will need to know how to use for the Presbytery meeting. Look for the registration for that Zoom tutorial in next week's Homesteader! Don't worry if you can't make this one...we also plan to log in about 30 min early on the day of the Presbytery to be available for any last minute questions.

Make sure you register below for Presbytery on the 21st by clicking below! If you aren't registered we won't know to send you the Zoom link for the meeting!

[Register for Presbytery!](#)



**PRESBYTERIAN  
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

**URGENT: COVID-19 devastation escalates.  
YOUR HELP IS NEEDED NOW**



Dear Friends in Christ,

You are in my prayers as we navigate the disaster of this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. I know most people are feeling the impact — health-wise, financially, emotionally. Our lives have been turned upside down in the span of just a few short weeks. Please know that the PC(USA) is with you in spirit. With God’s help, we will get through this together.

Every day, I hear stories from around the Church of how people are suffering and how their lives have been devastated. Unemployment, sickness, parents who are thrust into the role of teacher or caregiver, the rise in racism against the Asian community, the amount of deaths, including the disproportionate death rates experienced by people of color and those already living on the margins — all have been catastrophic.

In some communities, churches are barely making ends meet. They’re facing the reality of running out of money. They worry about how they’re going to pay their bills — much less support a pastor or provide critical services in their neighborhoods.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is here to help — again

In the PC(USA), we are blessed that Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, our disaster response ministry, is already at work with presbyteries and its network of partners to rush critical aid to those who are suffering as a result of COVID-19. Thanks to the longstanding generosity of the whole Church, through gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and other gifts from generous Presbyterians and congregations, PDA is providing vital provisions where needed — food and water, hygiene and sanitation supplies, training and more.

The unprecedented nature of COVID-19 draws into focus the core commitments of our General Assembly’s Matthew 25 foci — to eradicate systemic poverty, end structural racism and support congregational vitality. Therefore, PDA is also providing ministry continuation funding through our Matthew 25 commitment to support congregations who work with and draw from communities of people already experiencing the impact of poverty, racism or other forms of oppression.

**If you are able, please help us [Give](#), Act and Pray now.**

**[GIVE:](#)**

- Support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance’s emergency response and long-term recovery work as well as ministry continuation funding for congregations experiencing great needs during COVID-19 by making a gift today. Designate gifts to E052197 – Matthew 25.



- You can also give by phone at (800) 872-3283.

ACT:

- Wash your hands and stay at home. While we value the ministry of presence, currently the best way to care for others is to observe good hygiene and physical distancing.
- Celebrate the life-sustaining, generous engagement of congregations across the nation who are serving communities made more vulnerable by COVID-19's impact on their lives.
- Repudiate the hateful, racist actions and expressions that have targeted siblings of Asian descent during this pandemic.

PRAY:

- Seek comfort and hope in the Risen Lord who is always with us, sustaining and supporting us through every season of life.

Thanks in advance for your generosity.

In faith,

The Rev. Dr. Diane Givens Moffett  
President and Executive Director  
Presbyterian Mission Agency

## Sanitizing After Services

- [EPA List of Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)
- [CDC Cleaning & Disinfection for Households](#)



## FRAUD ALERT - URGENT

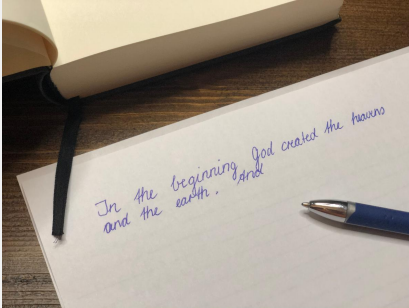
There is a scam email being sent to Church members asking you to purchase gift cards. Members at Westminster have been victim to this scam.

**Please DO NOT RESPOND to it! It is a fraud attempt.**

Be assured that a Church staff member will **NEVER SOLICIT YOU** in this manner.

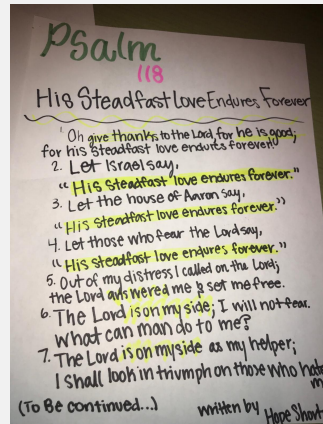
## Creativity Amid

# Chaos: The Nebraska Corona Bible



A project both daunting and intriguingly simple: People all across the Cornhusker State are copying the whole Bible in their own handwriting. Envisioned as a means to stay connected beyond the digital divide, the Nebraska Corona Bible will be a time capsule of these unprecedented times and a powerful testimony of hope amid this crisis.

In order to write the whole Christian Bible using individuals' handwriting or calligraphy, we are looking for 1,189 writers who each commit to copy a chapter of the Old or New Testament. Contributors are also welcome to add a short personal commentary, illustrations or artistic interpretations to their passage. Thus, the Bible is re-created in light of our questions and fears, but also our hope and trust as a testimony to this time of crisis ([Read entire news release here](#))



To participate or learn more, please check out the website [www.nebraskacoronabible.com](http://www.nebraskacoronabible.com) and sign up today for your favorite text.

**Contact:**

Rev. Thomas Dummermuth  
Eastridge Presbyterian Church  
tdummermuth@eastridge.org  
402-817-9642

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## Weekly Homestead Zoom Forum



WEEKLY ZOOM FORUM

**FAITH, NOT FEAR.**



Click the video above to watch yesterday's Zoom forum. They happen weekly on Wednesday's at 1pm. Click the link below to register. You will receive a confirmation e-mail from Zoom with the link to connect to the meeting.

**Register  
now!**

## *Weekly Prayer Requests*

### *Tekamah*

We would ask for prayers for our high school class of 2020, who are experiencing a graduation year that they weren't expecting. Also, a few of our members who are in care facilities who are both anxious about the health concerns surrounding the coronavirus, and also missing having contact with visitors. Here at Tekamah, we are entering a new chapter in our congregational life, with the arrival of a new pastor in September last year. New and renewed connections were being made before the enforced shut down, and we would pray that those would not fade, but strengthen during these trying times. There are also several changes being made within our town, with new offices opening up (until things stopped!) and demolition work in preparation for new additions to our school. We pray that these changes would be seen as positive for the life of our community.

### **Homestead Presbytery**

840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

**Monday-Thursday** 9:00am-4:00pm

**Friday** 9:00am-12:30pm

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