



## Weekly Missive

### Christian Denomination Leaders Address Changes: COVID-19



The Arizona judicatory leaders of the Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Church in America, the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), and The Episcopal Church have jointly released the following message regarding changes to worship amid the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak.

Church is not cancelled!!!

But in-person worship is. As leaders of our respective Christian denominations, we have all had to instruct our congregations to cease in person worship and meetings.

And yet, church is not cancelled. How is that so?

Church is not a building, and church is not just worship. Church is the gathering of faithful people through prayer, through love, and through caring for the vulnerable. Church is taking on new forms in light of COVID-19. Many congregations are worshiping via live-stream, or by other electronic means. They are using old fashioned phone calls to talk to members, meetings and Bible study are taking place over Zoom. Food pantries are distributing food as cars drive by, homeless dinner programs are offering meals to go, and the prayers of the faithful ascend to a loving God whose arms bind us together even when we cannot be face to face. Since we cannot be WITH one another, let us nonetheless be FOR each other.

These are faithful decisions, made out of our understanding of the great commandments to love God and love our neighbor. In this present moment, among other things, loving our neighbor means not being physically present with our neighbors, to protect them and us from potential infection.

It is more challenging to be church in a time such as this. Our pastors and leaders are having to develop new skills, and our members are having to extend more effort to stay connected. There are financial implications of not gathering in person, and as long as this continues it will grow ever harder to continue our basic outreach ministries caring to the poor, the sick, migrants, and the elderly.

The word "quarantine" comes from *quaresima*, the Italian word for Lent. Ships were "quarantined" for 40 days in port before they were able to dock and unload people and supplies. So of all seasons of the year to be experiencing quarantines, this present season of Lent is very appropriate. Just as Lent ends with Easter, so this season of quarantine will end with renewed faith in our Risen Lord—though it will likely not happen by April 12, 2020. Over the next few weeks, as the situation develops, we will discern what the right way to observe calendar Easter is; and what the right way to observe our eventual return to in-person congregational life, proclaiming "Alleluia" with shouts of joy. That day will be an Easter Day indeed, celebrating the restoration of new life, having passed through the valley of the shadow of death.

We, the leaders of our respective Christian denominations, hold you in prayer just as we ask you to hold us in prayer in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

**Rev. Jay R. Hartley**  
Regional Minister and President  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona

**The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer**  
Bishop, Grand Canyon Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Robert T. Hoshibata  
Resident Bishop  
The Desert Southwest Conference  
The United Methodist Church

Rev. Dr. William M. Lyons, Conference Minister  
Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Brad Munroe  
Presbytery Pastor for the Presbyteries of Grand Canyon and de Cristo  
Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA)

The Right Rev. Jennifer A. Reddall  
Sixth Bishop of Arizona  
The Episcopal Church

[For this and other missives, click here.](#)

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## Worship Resources

For those who want to encourage individuals, couples or, especially, parents with children to be able to focus on faith while at home, the Family Worship, Family Faith devotional will be sent out weekly.



[March 22](#)

## UPDATES

COVID19 Correspondence can be found on the Presbytery website under "News and Events" and "Files-Clerk of Session". [www.pbygrandcanyon.org](http://www.pbygrandcanyon.org)

NOTE: All pastors and CREs will receive a weekly invitation to a PASTOR'S CHECK IN to be offered on Tuesdays at 3:00 p.m. and Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. until further notice. All active pastors and CRE's will get an email with login information two days prior to each meeting. Email Carolyn McBurney by COB the day before if you do not receive it. [pbyoffice@gmail.com](mailto:pbyoffice@gmail.com)



The Board of Pensions decided effective immediately, COVID-19 testing will be considered preventive and will be reimbursed at 100% of the cost (no copays, no deductible.) This will apply to all three medical plans.

Additionally, for the PPO and EPO, co-pays for Telemedicine will be waived, regardless of diagnosis, through June 30. This does NOT apply to the HDHP plan.

I thought you might want to include this information in your next Presbytery newsletter. Anyone who has questions can call Philadelphia at 800 773-7752.

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## Lenten Devotional by Brad Munroe



The Christian faith is a communal practice; no one can be an island for we belong to each other. The Christian faith is a family, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a unified body made of many parts, a Temple—the dwelling place of God—consisting of many bricks. All of these images are plural, for the Christian faith speaks of “all y’all” rather than merely about you and me. Nowhere is this more needed than during Lent, for when we journey to the Cross it is, by definition, a perilous journey. Join us in this Lenten journey.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN SPRING GATHERING has been Cancelled



### TRANSFORMING THEOLOGY BEGINS NEW BOOK STUDY

Our monthly theology reflection group will begin a review of two recent books: "The Christian Gospel for Americans; A Systematic Theology", by David Ray Griffin, and "Joy Unspeakable: contemplative practices of the black church", by Barbara Holmes. Both are available through bookstores or Amazon. Griffin wrestles with traditional theological themes in light of the relationship of faith and science, and compares the current reality of American Empire with the Roman Empire of Jesus' day. Holmes explores the communal contemplative practices of African Americans espousing a mystical spirituality that contrasts with Griffin's more rational approach. She offers helpful insights as our society continues to confront systemic racism.

This group is open to all who are interested, ministers and laypersons. We meet on the third Wednesday of the month, 11:30AM to 1:30PM, at the home of David Sholin, 4609 E Sunrise Dr, Phoenix, 85044. We will meet next Wednesday, March 18th. You are invited to join the group even if you don't now have either book. For more information or directions email- [al@gepharts.org](mailto:al@gepharts.org) - or call - 480-251-1985. Al Gephart, pastor emeritus, University Presbyterian Church



### 36th Annual Older Adult Luncheon announced

The 36th Annual Senior Service Award luncheon will be held at a new venue Thursday, May 21. Desert Palms Presbyterian Church in Sun City West will host this much-loved event. Churches are asked to nominate a “saint” from their congregation to honor for their years of service in the church.

They will be recognized along with others across the presbytery at the luncheon.

Churches are then encouraged to honor their nominee in a special way at their own congregation as well.

The luncheon will begin at 11:45 a.m. and conclude around 2 p.m.

Complete an application and return with a check for lunch no later than May 10. See you there!

[CLICK HERE FOR AN APPLICATION](#)

LEST training has been rescheduled for April 13-17 (the week after Easter). Thank you for your understanding and please put the rescheduled LEST on your calendars!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



## MONTLURE IS HIRING!

We will keep a link to the list of positions on the Presbytery website under "Jobs"



Please keep these people in your prayers:

The Memorial Service for the Rev. Hipilito Melendez scheduled for March 28th has been postponed. We will notify you when it is rescheduled.

To access information below, click on text that is underlined!

### MARCH

28- PWP Spring Gathering, First Sun City- Cancelled

### APRIL

13-17- LEST TRAINING- New dates-[REGISTER](#)  
24-27- PCUSA Advocacy Training -[Click here for info](#)

### MAY

21-36th Annual Senior Service Awards at Desert Palms-[Application](#)

### JUNE

1-5 - Orangewood Traveling Day Camp-[Flyer](#)

[Leadership Minutes](#)

[Arizona Faith Network Events](#)

**Presbytery calendar**

**COVID-10 Guidance from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**

**Conducting a Zoom Meeting**

[PC\(USA\) - Useful resources for churches during Social Distancing](#)

**ACTIVE SHOOTER PLAN FOR CHURCHES**

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## Are you a new Clerk of Session?

**Did you know that your session records are supposed to be reviewed each year?**

Lucky for you, we offer a Review of Records one hour prior to every Presbytery meeting where you can have that done and ask questions of experienced clerks who are there to help! Just register for the presbytery meeting and indicate that you are coming to records review. In the meantime, contact Carol

Gerlach of Mesa First ([rlgclg6\\_6@hotmail.com](mailto:rlgclg6_6@hotmail.com)) with any questions and check out the presbytery website for lots of important resources. And, of course, let the presbytery office know you are now the clerk so that you can be on the communications list to get timely updates.

**Take a Look! Several new Job postings to explore! Feel free to share with friends!**

**JOBS- New Posting- 1/31**

**MARKETPLACE- Chancel Chairs**

Visit our website

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[www.pbygrandcanyon.org](http://www.pbygrandcanyon.org)

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