



Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

April Scripture Readings

Sunday April 5—Mark 11:1-11; 14:22-42

Palm Sunday

Thursday April 9—*Maundy Thursday*

Services in your homes

Friday April 10—Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Sunday April 12—Mark 16:1-8

Easter Sunday

Sunday April 19—Mark 15:33-16:8

Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers

Sunday April 26—Acts 1:1-14

Next Presbytery

Meeting

POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER

NOTICE

Next Session Meeting

TBD

We are working out how and

From the Pastor

*God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change
courage to change
the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.*

Amen.

The serenity prayer. It was originally penned by American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr as early as 1934. Since then, it has brought peace of mind and purpose to countless thousands of people in all kinds of challenging situations – recovery programs; cycles of anxiety or depression or other mental illnesses; basically any time that things feel out of our control.

Out of control ...

Kind of like now.

Friends, I have made no secret of the fact that I am a type A kind person. I like lists. I like plans. I like knowing what's going to happen and where and when and how. In short, I like control. And yet here we are in this time of a global pandemic, and suddenly, there seems to be very little that I feel like I can control. And I know I am not alone.

Another pastor friend posted this image in a Facebook group we're both a part of. And whether you're type A, type B, type Z, or type I-don't-really-care-one-way-or -the-other, we all feel that lack of control and the anxiety caused by this social distancing and the daily headlines and rising positive COVID-19 cases.

We are all struggling with our own fears, worries, anxieties, and things we desperately wish we could control right now. But for your own health and peace of mind, I encourage you to spend some time really sitting down and thinking about what it is in your life you can control right now and what you can't control. Sit down and make a list (if lists are your thing) or even a diagram like this one. Once you've figured out those things that are weighing on you but are truly out of your control, give them over to God. Lift them up to God in prayer. Be dramatic about it, if that's what you need to do. If you're a visual person, cross off each uncontrollable worry as you lift it up. Scribble it out with a dark black marker. If you're an auditory person, name those uncontrollable worries out loud to God, at

From the Pastor

at the top of your voice, if you need to. If you're a kinetic (physical) person, write each individual uncontrollable worry on a separate slip of paper and, after you've given it over to God, tear that paper up. Burn it (safely). Flush it down the toilet. Do whatever you need to do to lay those burdens down, because God knows (friends, God truly knows) that we are carrying more than our fair share of burdens right now. We don't need to add any more.

Be assured that I am holding each and every one of you in prayer and light in the mist of all this. Be assured that we are a community even from afar – even when we cannot be in the same room with one another, we can still wish one another peace and love and good morning. Call each other. Text each other. Send one another a little card or letter in the mail. We are a community far beyond the walls of our beloved little white church on the hill, and this is a chance to remind each other (and ourselves) of that. And be assured that God is with us:

Don't fear; because I am with you; don't be afraid, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you with my righteous hand.

All who rage against you will be shamed and disgraced.

Those who contend with you will be as nothing and will perish.

You will look for opponents, and won't find them.

Those who fight you will be of no account and will die.

*I am the Lord your God,
who grasps your strong hand,
who says to you, Don't fear; I will help you.*

- Isaiah 41:10-13

Yes, friends, God is with us enfolding us in arms of mercy and love. So stay safe. Stay home when you can. But stay connected – to each other, to me, to your friends and loved ones, and to God – in the ways that best feed your soul. And may God's peace sustain your heart, your soul, and your mind in this difficult time.

From the Pastor



Pastor Dija

Coronavirus Response

In this unprecedented time, friends, there are many ways that we're attempting to remain connected and maintain the worshipping community that we so love. The session will be meeting (remotely) some time in the next few weeks to discuss further options (fellowship, adult prayer/Bible study, children's story time, etc.). Here is what we have so far:

Sunday morning worship options:

- Zoom: All you need is internet access for your phone, your device (tablet, etc.), or your computer. For a phone or tablet, you will need to download the app. The icon is below (just so you know that you've found the correct app). On Sunday morning, I will send out an email with the necessary meeting ID number (for the app) as well as the direct link (for computer access). I will start the "meeting" (i.e. – worship) about 10 mins. early. I suggest you try to connect as early as you can just to make sure everything is working as well as possible.
- Facebook Live: We are hoping that this will work! On our first Sunday (March 22), Facebook Live was not working for most churches across the country. My guess is it had more to do with an overload of demand on Facebook's servers than anything. To access worship via Facebook, all you have to do is search for our church page ("Presbyterian Church of Oronoco"). The live feed should be up and running.
- YouTube Live: We will also be attempting to stream via YouTube Live (for those who don't have Facebook and/or are having trouble with Zoom). If you go into YouTube and search for our channel (again, "Presbyterian Church of Oronoco"), you should be able to access our live stream.
- Full worship document: On Sunday mornings, included in the email that has the Zoom mtg. ID number and streaming link, will be a full write-up of worship – all the prayers, the readings, and the full text for the sermon. There will probably also be a hymn that we will listen to (no worries ... I won't make you sing ... unless you want to!) If nothing else, you can read through the service (either as you stream along or on your own).

Coronavirus Response Continued

Options after Sunday morning:

- YouTube channel: As we Zoom our worship, it records the whole “meeting.” After worship is done on Sunday morning, I will upload the video to our YouTube channel for viewing whenever you have the chance. All the rest of our online worship services will also be there, so you can go back if there’s one you missed. I will also post the link to each week’s video on our Facebook page and will include that same link in our Monday morning prayer request email.

For prayer requests, please be sure you get those to Pastor Lisa before Sunday morning. There are too many technological elements to be juggling to try to do prayer requests live, so I will need to have the prayer requests sent to me in advance (call, text, email, or Facebook messenger). With everything that needs to be set up and worked out on Sunday mornings, I will not have time to make a last minute check for prayer requests, so please get them to me before that time. (If you do get a prayer request to me on Sunday morning and it doesn’t make it into the worship service, I will be sure to include it in the Monday morning prayer email.)

Church Instagram Account

In an attempt to make it easier for all of us to share pictures of church activities and events, we’ve created a Presbyterian Church of Oronoco Instagram account:

@oronocochurch

Feel free to either tag the church account in your own postings or, if you aren’t on Instagram and have pictures you’d like to share, email or text them to Pastor Lisa and she’ll post them. And remember to follow our account so you can keep up with all our fun and hijinks!



**Follow us on
Instagram**

A World of Hears

As you've been driving or walking around since social distancing began, you may have seen houses, schools, business, etc. with a bunch of paper hearts in the window. (There are already some in Oronoco ... I've seen them!) Or maybe there are hearts chalked on the sidewalk. And maybe you wondered to yourself, "Hmmm ... I wonder what those hearts are all about?" Or maybe you just thought, "Isn't that cute?"

It is cute, but there is, in fact, more to those hearts, friends. There's a movement that started online (#aworldofhearts) as an encouragement even in these forcibly distant times that you are loved and part of a community. The beautifully basic idea is to share love through hearts posted on your window. There's a Facebook group that goes along with this movement (if you'd like an invite to the group, let Pastor Lisa know), but by no means do you have to have Facebook to join in this heartfelt (yes, pun intended) and lovely tribute to the human spirit and community.

Get out your scissors and some tape. Find some paper – colored or not, whatever size. Heck, it could even be yesterday's newspaper or some scrap of junk mail you were about to throw away. Cut out as many hearts as you can stand and display them in your window. Because we're all in this together.







Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 5, 2020
10:00 a.m. worship (online)

Maundy Thursday

Soup & Bread Supper
Worship Around the Table
Thursday, April 9, 2020
Since we cannot gather around common tables at church this year, I will email/mail out a service that you can all participate in around your tables at your homes. I encourage you to try to start your meals – whatever they may be – as close to 6:00 p.m. as possible. That we, even apart, we will be taking our meals together.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

A Service of Darkness and Shadow
Friday, April 10, 2020
7:30 p.m. (online)

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 12, 2020
10:00 a.m. worship (online)

Minnesota FoodShare March

Campaign

Due to the coronavirus outbreak and all of the social distancing, we will be postponing our Pack the Pews until a later date. Since all of the funds and donations that we raise during this event stay local at our Oronoco Food Shelf, this postponement will not have much impact on the event itself – only that dates that we have chosen to participate in it.

Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers

Just a little explanation: The Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers is a tradition that comes from the Eastern Orthodox Church. All of the gospels describe the women as being the first to approach Jesus' tomb on Easter morning to find it empty. Some name these women. Some just call them "the women." And there are men among the myrrh-bearers as well,

namely Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus the Pharisee. Very often, the text that speaks of the myrrh-bearers is read on Easter Sunday. Indeed, if you look at the texts that are scheduled for the Sundays in April, you will see that our Easter Sunday reading overlaps with that of the following Sunday, the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers. On Easter Sunday, we are focused on the empty tomb and the good news of a risen Savior and all that means for our lives and our world. Taking the following Sunday to celebrate the myrrh-bearers gives us a chance to focus on an element of that text that can often get overlooked in the face of folded graveclothes and hallelujahs: those who returned.

Update from Revs. Shelvis & Nancy Smith-Mather

Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather are the missionaries serving in South Sudan and Uganda who we support with our 2nd Sunday Spare Change Sunday funds. Shelvis, Nancy, Jordan, and Adalyn welcomed another daughter/sister into their lives in October – baby Nicole. If you would like an update on the incredible work that Shelvis and Nancy are doing with RECONCILE International and how their family is doing, please go to <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/shelvis-and-nancy-smith-mather/>. Shelvis has also recently begun research with Oxford University's School of Anthropology and Theology as well as Africa Studies Centre. In the top right portion of the screen you will find a box with a link to their 10 most recent update letters. Also on this page, you can find links to contact both Shelvis and Nancy as well as information on how to contribute financially as an individual to their mission.

Church Video

We'd like to put together a church video for our website – something fun and interactive that lets people know what so many of us love about this church in your own voices. So I invite you to start thinking about the answer to one or more of these questions:

- What do you love about the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco?
- How would you describe this church to someone who's never been here before?
- How do you feel when you're at church, either for worship or some other church event?
- What do you wish people knew about the Presbyterian Church of Oronoco?
- What are three words that describe this church for you? Why?

In the coming months, I'll be looking to record you and your answers. We'd like to use various locations around the church. We'd love to get lots of different voices. The recordings can be done as individuals or in small groups (no more than three people per group). Of course, we won't be forcing anyone to share for the video, but we're hoping you'll volunteer!



Synod School 2020

This year's theme is "What Shall We Tell Them?" from Psalm 78:4: "We will tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of God, and God's might, and the wonders that God has done." Convocation speaker Rev. Dr. Mark Davis, and worship leaders will be Rev. Mary Koon (morning worship) and Rev. Casey Wait (evening worship). You could take classes in everything from pickleball and folk dancing to Tunisian crocheting and tie dye to climate change and encountering racism discussions through children's literature (Pastor Lisa's teaching that one!) to studying 1 John or exploring the Old Testament. There are 81 different classes to choose from in all!

For more information, visit the Synod School website:

<https://www.lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool>. If you're curious about Synod School, please talk to Pastor Lisa.

There is talk that Synod School 2020 may be cancelled as well, depending on where we are with the coronavirus pandemic as a country at that time. The decision will be made by June, and I will keep you informed.

150th Anniversary

The Presbyterian Church of Oronoco is turning 150 this year!! That's pretty amazing, friends! So we want to CELEBRATE!! The session has chosen Sunday, July 12 as our celebration date (since our actual 150th anniversary falls over 4th of July weekend). We will keep this schedule for now, but it is subject to change, depending on what happens with the coronavirus pandemic. We will update you as we can.





Needs for Dorothy Day

House

We will be postponing our collection of donation items for the Dorothy Day House until the threat from the coronavirus has lifted. Once that happens, we will re-publish the list in the next available newsletter.

Thank you.

All Around the Campfire

It's that time again! One Sunday a month, we'll be gathering in the evening on the church lawn. There will be a campfire. There will be lawn games. There will be s'mores. This is a chance for us to spend some fun, relaxed, unstructured time together, and to invite people who may not be as comfortable coming through the church doors for the first time. Bring your neighbors and friends. Bring kids. Let's have fun!

As with everything else, we will be monitoring the progress of the coronavirus. It is our hope that by the time the end of June rolls around, we may be looking at the end of social distancing and this pandemic. But if we have to cancel, we will let you know.

- June 28: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- July 26: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- August 23: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- September 27: 5:30-8:00 p.m.



April Star Word Prompt:



**Where do you find
the hope and good
news of the
resurrection
in/through your star
word?**