



Signs of the Future

Is it just me? With all the bad news surrounding us amid the pandemic, is it just my imagination, or has it been one of the most beautiful springs ever? Less pollution? Cooler temperatures that have stretched out the spring blossoms before the heat of summer? Or maybe it is this way every year and either I've been moving too fast to notice, or this year my eyes and spirit are just in need of signs of goodness, wonder, and beauty. Then this week, after a spring rain, came the double rainbow that seemed to be jumping out of the church steeple. (Thank you to Nicole Colwell for sending me the picture!) That rainbow had a clarity I'm not sure I've ever witnessed before.

While Jesus had cautionary words about "looking for signs," I'm going to take all this as a gift from God, and, yes, a sign. A sign that in fact God remains with us throughout this challenging time. A sign that the forces that bring chaos and destruction – that flood our abilities to manage life – these all answer to God. A sign that all the world remains in God's hands, and that those hands are good hands, that even now are creating and recreating, bringing beauty, health, and hope to our lives.

Yes, there are losses. Deep losses. Nearly all of us know someone forever affected by the ravages of this disease. We all have days when there are no signs to lift us. All our lives have been tossed by the waves of this pandemic, and it remains to be seen how the world and our life together will look as the waters recede and life "as we knew it" returns. But that may yet be a while.

As John and I wrote in our recent email update to the congregation, teams within the church are already exploring options and making plans for how this church will look and function as we open the ark of the church. Our Reopening Taskforce, with members of Session, Trustees, and Deacons, has had thoughtful discussions about all aspects of the life of the church. The Christian Education and Worship and Music Committees have focused in on their critical areas with an eye toward reopening.

While much remains unclear, particularly around timing, some things are coming into focus.

- We continue to closely watch the guidance of New York State as phased reopening begins. As of now, churches look to be a part of Phase 4, which hopefully will happen in the next month or two.
- Even when the building reopens for worship, some people will still need to continue to worship from home.
- We will maintain an ability to join in worship online, and are already looking at permanent ways to do so.
- For all gatherings at church, masks and physical distancing will be required for some period of time.
- While some groups may be able to resume meeting with appropriate precautions, other gatherings will prove difficult to safely manage. Already the June NOLA trip has been cancelled, and Sunday School for children will present a unique challenge.
- As we need to limit the size of our gatherings for some period of time, college student and church member Mark Willis has designed a worship attendance sign-up system for us to use when we reopen.
- Sadly, due to the mechanics of these activities, singing together and communion may be some of the last things to return.

What is next for us clearly won't be what it used to be, at least for a time. But like that rainbow in the sky recently, it fills me with hope just to be able to think about the future together - even this new "abnormal normal." As we said in our email, "There will surely be awkward moments as we adjust to new protocols and practices. There will be times of frustration, disappointment, and grief. We will have countless opportunities to exercise the spiritual gifts of patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control. But there will be wonderful surprises, great celebrations, and moments of deep satisfaction. We will get to see glimpses of the new thing God is doing, even now. We will have opportunities to savor the spiritual gifts of love, joy, peace, generosity, and faithfulness."

As we enter this new month, and this new chapter in the story of this church, please keep an eye out for communication about our plans for moving forward. Keep an eye out as well for the signs of God very much present and at work all around us. And may God's Spirit guide and encourage us – giving to us all the gifts we need to step as gracefully as we can into the future together.

Looking forward with hope,

Every evening at 7:00p.m., after the chiming of the hour, our church bells peal for 2 minutes in support of all those on the frontlines of this COVID-19 pandemic.

Announcements




A sabbatical, from the Hebrew: *shabbat* (i.e., Sabbath), in Greek: *sabbatikos*, is a rest or break from work. The concept of the sabbatical is based on the Biblical practice of *shmita*, which is related to agriculture. According to Leviticus 25, Jews in the Land of Israel must take a year-long break from working the fields every seven years. A "sabbatical" has come to mean an extended absence in the career of an individual to find rest and renewal.

As an outgrowth of my personnel review in 2019 the topic of taking a sabbatical was discussed. In my 38 years of ordained ministry and 44 years of working in a church, I've only taken one sabbatical, mostly due to timing. In October of 2019 our session voted to allow me some sabbatical time in 2020.

Dan and I have talked about the current situation, and with his agreement and the support of the Personnel Committee, I will be taking my sabbatical from June 15 to September 12, 2020. While some of my plans have changed due to travel issues and closures, I still look forward to taking this time away for refreshment, renewal, and re-creation to empower me in my ministry among you at Rye Presbyterian Church over the next several years.

In my absence, I will hold you in my prayers and would invite you to do the same for me. May God be at work in our lives preparing us for what our world and church may look like come this September.

Be at peace, 

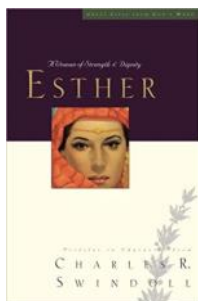


Online donation options are available on the RPC Website Giving page. Click [here](#) to donate. Please contact Maida Robinson at mrobinson@ryepc.com, if you have any questions or need assistance. Many thanks for your continued generosity and support of the church!

RYE-BASED EFFORT TO HELP OTHERS

If you're feeling healthy and safe, and are eager to find a way to HELP OTHERS during this unsettling time, we have a simple, Rye-based efforts that could really use your help!

- RPC Church Member, Molly Howson, has started a campaign to raise funds for the purpose of providing much needed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to frontline healthcare workers in New York City, Westchester County, NY, and Greenwich, CT. Over the past few weeks Molly has raised over \$37,000 and purchased over 7,000 pieces of PPE, including masks, face shields, goggles, disposable hazmat suits, gowns, gloves and sanitizer. These supplies have gone to more than 15 hospitals and nursing homes as well as local EMS/FD/PD. While this has been a great start, this is an ongoing issue that is not going away anytime soon and the needs are still significant. Any contribution helps. If you would like to donate, you can Venmo Molly Howson PPE for Frontline Workers @molly-howson or donate through Go Fund Me at : <https://www.gofundme.com/f/fundthefrontppe>.



TUESDAY AFTERNOON WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP GROUP 1:00 p.m., via Zoom

Esther: A Woman of Strength and Dignity by Charles R. Swindoll.

We will meet via Zoom – please contact [Alicia Baldwin](#) or [Courtney Bennett](#) for the link.



PRAYER WALL

As a way to connect to one another and to God throughout this time, you are invited to make prayer requests known on the RPC website Prayer Wall ([click here](#)). Together we continue to pray for all those in need throughout this unique time. All can share anonymously, but please keep in mind that it is a public forum.

UPDATE RESULTS ON PREVIOUS RYE-BASED EFFORTS

Sew Happy—Made and Delivered Masks to Area Medical Personnel: We are finished. 12,500 masks made and raised \$15,000 for Feeding Westchester!

Collected Donations to Deliver Meals from Local Restaurants to Medical Staff Members:

After starting what was expected to be only a few donations, we were able to raise over \$33,000. Nineteen different hospitals all over Westchester, the Bronx, and NYC, local first responders, and even a few families dealing with Covid-19 received lunches or dinners. The overwhelming response from the community has been nothing short of amazing. The local restaurants are beyond thankful and we hope that we have done enough to help them make it through this unprecedented time.

Congratulations and thank you to both of these community undertakings!

Sesquicentennial Service Challenge, Baby Bundle Drive

Volunteering at RPC . . .

Reflections on Being a Youth Hockey Coach

by Mark Rooney

I was honored when Reverend Miller asked me to write an article on why it is important for me to volunteer my time coaching youth hockey.

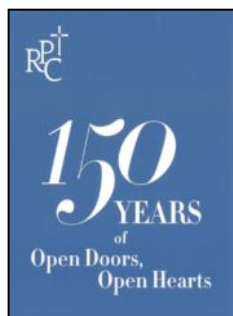
Hockey was an important part of growing up in the Boston area and I developed a love for the game at an early age. Hockey is a sport like few others because it requires heavy parental involvement all the way down too helping sons and daughters get dressed. Hockey parents everywhere can relate to the back pain involved with tying skates for a 6-year-old!

I was incredibly fortunate to have amazing parents who drove thousands of miles to and spent countless hours in frozen ice rinks. Their love and support is the main reason I volunteer—and seeing the smile on my son and his teammates' faces is worth all the early mornings spent coaching.

In addition to the sacrifices my parents made, I volunteer because of the amazing coaches I had from 6 years old all the way through college. I can name every one of my coaches at every level (I remain in touch with a few of them even to this day) and their commitment to my development as a competitor and teammate is something I only hope I can pass along to players I coach.

Mark Rooney is a church member who volunteers in the community as a hockey coach.

The Sesquicentennial Service Challenge



2020 marks the sesquicentennial of our sanctuary. 150 years of people coming in and going out through the doors of our beautiful sanctuary. People come in to find their faith strengthened and renewed as we worship together. People then go out in service to the world beyond our doors.

The Mission and Outreach Committee invites you to join your fellow disciples of Rye Presbyterian Church in the 2020 Sesquicentennial Service Challenge!

The goal: at least 150 minutes of service from every member for every month of 2020. With 1052 members, that would mean the total number of services minutes for 2020 would be 1,893,600!

Please know that ANY volunteer service you do either with the church or in the community COUNTS. If you are giving the gift of your time, it counts. When logging your minutes, you can group your minutes together. You don't need to log each activity separately. Simply total your minutes and then list, as briefly as possible, what activities you did. The two things we are tracking are total number of minutes (not hours), and the variety of activities that people are involved in as they give the gift of their time by volunteering.

Minutes logged thus far: 153,364

TO LOG YOUR MINUTES, GO TO: <https://ryepc.com/150>



BABY BUNDLE DRIVE

Welcoming New Babies – Helping New Parents with Open Door Family Medical Center

The risks and challenges of bringing a new baby into the world are amplified during this stressful time, especially for low-income families.

From Mother's Day to Father's Day, we invite you to help a new family and honor mothers, fathers and babies everywhere by donating to Baby Bundles (Formerly Baby Box; due to sanitary concerns the bassinet box is on hold now.)

Donating is easy – click on the [Open Door Amazon Wishlist link](#) and select from the baby items needed. You can order a single item, any amount or mix, or an entire bundle. Amazon ships directly to Open Door, where the staff will assemble bundles and deliver to the families. Please make sure to include your name and contact information so Open Door knows who to thank.

Shop, donate AND make an impactful difference for vulnerable new babies

Christian Education, Confirmation, Bible & Hymnal Sunday



Sunday School

Starting mid-June, we are trying something new this summer – an at-home/virtual Vacation Bible School program! The curriculum is Illustrated Ministry's **Compassion Camp: Be Loved. Be Kind. Be You.** The curriculum's theme is compassion for others, ourselves, and the world, and it is geared toward K-5th graders, plus activities specifically for preschool-age children. Each week we will focus on a different theme:

Session 1: At the Table (Luke 15:11-32)

Session 2: To the Neighbor
(Mark 2:1-12)

Session 3: For Myself (Mark 12:28-31)

Session 4: As We Move (Ruth 1:1-22)

Session 5: With the world (Leviticus 25)

The curriculum's flexible structure allows families to choose from a variety of ways to engage the theme and scripture readings for each week at home. We will use the Christian Ed weekly newsletter to send out all materials and videos. If you would like to receive these materials and are not already signed up for our newsletter, please contact [Rev. JP](#). We hope you and your families join us as we engage scripture and cultivate compassion together!

Middle School Connection

RPC's Middle School Youth Group is open to all 6th-8th graders.

-GroupMe! We are keeping the connections going through a GroupMe group

chat! If your youth would like to be a part of our group chat, please send [Rev. JP](#) either your youth's cell-phone number or email.

-Wednesday "Gatherings": Our weekly gatherings will come to an end on Wednesday, June 10. We hope your middle school youth can join us for the last few gatherings! At the same time, we wish to keep checking in with one another, so we will meet when the Spirit moves us throughout the summer. We are also planning ways we can serve our community together during the summer while following social distancing guidelines. More information coming your way soon!

YOUTH GROUP High School Youth Group

-GroupMe! Join our group chat for updates and keeping in touch with one another! If your youth would like to be a part of our group chat, please have them send [Rev. JP](#) either their cell-phone number or email.

-Wednesday Instagram Devotionals: Rev. JP will continue with our live devotionals on our Instagram account ([ryepresyouth](#)) on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. until Wednesday, June 10. From there, we will explore different ways to use the account to keep everyone connected this summer. We will also post updates on possible ways we can serve our community together.

-Wednesday Zoom Check-In:

Our weekly Zoom check-ins will come to an end on **Wednesday, June 10**, as well. We hope you can join us for the last few gatherings! From there, we will

move toward a monthly gathering, during which we will check in with each other and see how we can support each other. We are also planning ways we can serve our community together during the summer while following social distancing guidelines. More information coming your way soon! Contact [Rev. JP](#) for the Zoom link.

Confirmation 2020

At the end of May, slightly delayed, and with hopes of celebrating Confirmation Sunday this month, the confirmation class met with church elders to discuss their year of study, their journey of faith, and their readiness to confirm the vows made at their baptism. At a joint meeting of the class with the entire Session on May 27, the elders voted unanimously to welcome them into the life and mission of the church as our newest members. Congratulations to them all!

That said, it won't be until the fall that we likely will be able to gather in worship together with a congregation big enough to welcome 27 new members and their families. So Confirmation Sunday celebration is on hold for now. A bit of a letdown after all the hard work that this class has put in, but we look forward to being together and to celebrating then!

Confirmation



Bible & Hymnal Sunday— June 14

Families of 1st graders and high school seniors are invited to come by the church on Sunday, June 14, to receive their bibles from our pastors! We are also handing out hymnals that day to the 6th graders graduating from the Children's Choir! We will be stationed at the back of the church near the entrance to the nursery school. Please use the Milton Road entrance.

To keep everyone healthy and safe, we are asking everyone to stay in their cars and wear masks. Also, to keep up with social distancing guidelines, we will hand out bibles and hymnals based on the following schedule using last names:

- 2:00-2:30 p.m. - A-H
- 2:30-3:00 p.m. - I-P
- 3:00-3:30 p.m. - Q-Z

If you are unable to pick up your bible or hymnal that day, please let Rev. JP know ([click here](#)). We can figure out an alternative way to get your bible or hymnal to you.

Music Notes, Confirmation Class 2020



From Jason Charneski

Resigned to Reality: What Might the Foreseeable Future Hold?

On May 5, I watched a webinar sponsored by the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), the Barbershop Harmony Society, and ChorusAmerica. While none of these organizations proscribed anything (they certainly don't have the legal power to do so), the recommendations given by the medical and administrative professionals (based on scientific research, the accounts of choir and orchestra members being infected as a result of being together in rehearsals and performances, and the non-availability of curatives, vaccines, or an accurate rapid response test for live virus) are such that the performing arts world looks to be "on pause" for a longer period of time than other industries.

This simply is due to the nature of the transmissibility of the novel coronavirus via five major factors: 1. breathing – especially the type of breathing required for singing or playing a wind instrument – due to aerosol droplets; 2. the necessity of performing ensembles' members needing to be closer to each other than allowed by the recommended guidelines for physical distancing (27' – yes, feet – for singing groups); 3. the time/exposure ratio; as related to 4. the availability of fresh air in enclosed/HVAC environmentally-controlled spaces (most systems recirculate the air in a room; they do not exchange it for fresh air. Possible solutions include UV-C light or disinfecting agents applied to the system – these could be cost-prohibitive); and 5. the need for significantly smaller audiences in concert halls and theaters in order to honor the 6' physical distancing guidelines (some halls – Symphony Hall in Boston, given as an example, could honor such at only 19% of its seating capacity), thus a need for major increases in ticket prices.

What does this mean for the music ministry here at Rye Presbyterian Church? Until a vaccine is produced and administered that results in enough people developing the antibodies to defeat the virus, it is advised that there be no group singing: no hymns or responses sung by the congregation assembled (this

assumes our area reaches and maintains the metrics required by the state for Phase 4 of reopening), along with no choirs. We still will have hymns for singing from home (because many still will choose to participate via the livestream platforms), led by the pastors and me, and, hopefully, a vocal or instrumental soloist (all distanced from each other in order to observe the guidelines). Yes, that's the bitter reality.

If ongoing research and data provide information that it is safe to resume group singing prior to the administration of a vaccine or development of curative treatments, we will, of course, plan to do so in accord with any recommendations contained therein. The human voice is called to praise the Lord, and singing is one of most effective and beautiful ways to do so; yet, it must be rendered in a way that does not put others at risk for illness. This cuts to a point that is necessary now and will be so in the long-term: If you're ill, please refrain from being in public.

So, what do we do in the meantime? We wait. We heed the psalmist's words, "Be still and know that I am God." This is not an easy thing to do, as we are so accustomed to instant answers and satisfaction. What is God saying to us – to you – in this time of waiting? I view it as being placed in "exile" from the people – congregation and choir members – who come together to make music of praise and petition. It's okay for us to have a period of making music that laments the situation in which all of God's people now find themselves, to mourn what we have lost; but, also, to pray for what will be and to look forward to that day when our songs are offered again and our communities are renewed in so doing.

We still can listen to music. We still can sing at home. We still can explore God's covenant relationship with us through scripture (as a spiritual discipline during these pandemic days, I am committed to reading the Bible from start to finish – something I have not yet tried. Anyone else willing to join me – aim for 20-30 minutes per day?). We still can look beyond the Bible, as we can read of, watch, or listen to the witness to God's work and presence in the approximately 1,900 years since the New Testament books were written.

Keep calm. Be still. Carry on.

Jason



A portion of the Confirmation Class meeting via Zoom.

RPC THRIFT SHOP NEWS

What's Next for the Thrift Shop? How can the Thrift Shop go on?



Obviously, opening any time soon is out of the question. But we have ideas!

The most logical and simplest option for resuming sales in a limited way seems to be Facebook. At present, only Suzanne Davies is allowed into the shop. She will be taking items out and posting them on the Rye Presbyterian Thrift Shop Facebook page.



Thus - If you have not 'liked' us yet, now is the time:
Please "Like" the [Rye Presbyterian Thrift Shop Facebook page](#).

(If you click on the underlined link above, it will take you to our page!)

We are sorry if you are not on Facebook, but we believe it offers the best possibilities for this purpose, at least for now.

If there is a TYPE of object you want (we're planning to retrieve pet crates, for example), LET CINDY KUSTER KNOW (click here). Also, if there's some over-\$25 object from a past email that you remember and want to buy, we *may* be able at least to attempt to find it for you. If you are not on our email list, contact Cindy Kuster.

We're working on implementing this plan of action! Hopefully we'll have something to offer you soon.

The 2020 Thrift Shop 'Joan Kellogg Award' winners announced!



This year's recipients: Sally Tobin and Elizabeth Zahm (Tall and Small)

Sally is the Jewelry Queen AND a Tiffany Queen, and also one of the tallest Thrift Shop volunteers. She has put in countless hours on repairing, cleaning, pricing and preparing the jewelry for display as well as other Tiffany Room responsibilities. Plus, she's fun to work with, and hilarious.
Hooray for Sally!



Elizabeth is an absolute dynamo, helping both on Wednesdays and on Thursdays. She is also one of the shortest Thrift Shop volunteers. Despite being petite, Elizabeth does the most hauling of heavy objects, between rooms, back and forth from the Dungeon Room, and up and down from the Way Down Space (below the cashier area).
Hooray for Elizabeth, too!

Joan Kellogg Award recipients are allocated money from the Grant pool to give an extra donation to one or two Grant Recipients of their choice.

Thrift Shop Grants Have Been Awarded!

Because of the COVID-19 crisis, many of our grant recipients are in dire need of support NOW. The Women's Association decided to give out our Thrift Shop Grants early with the money we made before the pandemic hit.

We dipped into our reserve fund a bit as well, due to the circumstances. Total given out this year - \$53,000! A huge shout-out to Thrift Shop Queen Suzanne Davies, who is keeping us all going, and to Debbie Zingg, Grant Committee chair, who pulled the Grant Committee together early.

[Click here](#) for the list of Grant recipients with links to their websites included.



PLEASE consider a donation of your own to these worthy organizations.

Grant Committee Members Zooming away, discussing the grants and the Thrift Shop

Worship, Bible Study, June Meetings

WORSHIP

Worship Together Online Via Live Stream!

- ✦ 10:00 a.m. Every Sunday
- ✦ 8:00 p.m. Thursdays, June 4 & 11
Contemplative Services
(June 11 last one until the Fall)

*Instructions on joining by Zoom
and other platforms
are on the church website [here](#).
Bulletins will also be available there.*

We look forward to "seeing" you in worship!

JUNE MEETINGS

Board Meetings

Trustees: Wednesday, June 17, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Session: Wednesday, June 24, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Youth

Connection: Wednesday Gatherings, June 3 & 10, 5:30 p.m.,
via Zoom (*ending June 10*) —
contact [Rev. JP](#) for link

GroupMe Chats: Contact [Rev. JP](#).

High School Youth Group:

Wednesday Instagram Devotionals, 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Zoom Check-ins, June 3 & 10, 3:30 p.m.,
(*ending June 10*) - contact [Rev. JP](#) for link

GroupMe Chats: Contact [Rev. JP](#).

Other Church Meetings

3 Ts: Tuesday, June 16, 10:00 a.m., via Zoom.

Contact [Jane Mickatavage](#) (914-967-8622) or
[Nancy Steed](#) (914-328-9658).

Mission & Outreach: Wednesday, June 3, 7:30 p.m.,
via Zoom—contact [John Miller](#) for link

Personnel Committee: Monday, June 8, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom

Stephen Ministry:

Leaders: Tuesday, June 2, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom

Even Stephens: Wednesday, June 3 & 17,
10:00 a.m., via Zoom

Prime Ministers: Thursday, June 25, 6:30 p.m.,
via Zoom

Thrift Shop: Closed until further notice

Tuesday Afternoon Women's Discipleship:

Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m.,
via Zoom—contact [Alicia Baldwin](#)
or [Courtney Bennett](#) for the link.

Worship & Music: Monday, June 1, 7:30 p.m.,
via Zoom

BIBLE STUDIES

Men's Sunday Evening Bible Study

Sundays, June 14 and 28, at 8:00 p.m.
via Zoom – contact [Dan Love](#) for the link

Our reading and reflection on the Gospel of Luke goes steadily on (and at our pace, it will do so for some time... but what is the rush?) We meet at 8:00 p.m. via Zoom on Sundays, June 7 and 21. If you'd like to be on the email reminder list, please contact Dan Love – [Dan Love](#).

Monday Morning Bible Discussion

Mondays throughout June, 9:30 a.m.

via Zoom – contact [Dan Love](#) for the link

As June begins, the Monday study will be completing its survey of the entire Old Testament – a journey guided by the creative minds at [The Bible Project](#). If you haven't seen their website, it is worth a look!

Beginning this month, we are on to the New Testament! All are welcome to join in on Mondays throughout the month of June at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom. Please contact Dan Love (dlove@ryepc.com) for more information and to receive the Zoom link.

Saturday Morning Women's Bible Study

Saturdays, June 6 & 13

Via Zoom – contact [Cynthia De Santis](#) for the link.



Murdoch Memorial Tree

Rye Presbyterian Nursery School

Greetings to the RPC Community from Kristin Bassett Kumar

In order to bring smiles and joy to our preschool families, the faculty created a fun music video. The video shows the teachers and staff dancing to lyrics created for the preschool. The children loved learning the “Rye Pres Shuffle” and sent videos back to the faculty! In addition, the video was featured on News 12 Westchester on May 11th! It was a fun and creative way for the school community to stay connected during this time.

To view the faculty’s video, visit
https://youtu.be/Ho_IZA2sHZ8.



The Rev. Daniel Love, *Co-Pastor*

The Rev. Dr. John Miller, *Co-Pastor*

The Rev. Jean-Paul Marshall, *Associate Pastor for Christian Education*

Jason Charneski, *Director of Music and Organist*

Lisa Rawson, *Director of Choirs for Children and Youth*

Maida Robinson, *Chief Administrative Officer*

Peggy Berretta, *Administrative Assistant*

Denise LeVan, *Pastoral Assistant*

Juan Velasquez, *Head Sexton/Building Manager*

Alonso Osorio, *Sunday Sexton*

Richard Gress *Knock Intern in Sacred Music*

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We are a Stephen Ministry church.