



face. I ended that sermon with a poem by religious author Laura Kelly Fanucci. (It appears below.) But I want to close with the final words, because, in some way they capture for me what I hope and pray our “new normal” may look and feel like. She writes: “When this ends, may we find that we have become more like the people we wanted to be, we were called to be, we hoped to be, and may we stay that way – better for each other because of the worst.”

Peace to you,

As our shelter in place continues, which we are doing for the greater good of our communities, our neighbors, it seems like many people are becoming wearied by the “new normal” of working from home, schooling from home, and having *everyone* home. After more than a month of isolation, more and more people are talking about “opening the country” back up again, or getting back to “normal,” especially in time for the summer. Yet U.S. health advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci has suggested that the world may never get back to what it considered “normal” before the coronavirus.

As people of The Book, we can turn to the scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, to see how God’s people have had to deal with the loss of “normal.” In the Old Testament, you have the stories of the Exodus and the Exiles. While God’s people were in exile, whether it be in Egypt or Babylon, they dreamt of what it would be like to return to their “promised land” and some sense of normalcy. They knew what it had been like because the generations before them passed down the stories of that land flowing with milk and honey. When they came up out of Egypt, when they returned from Babylon, the land was anything but the “normal” they had dreamt about.

In the New Testament we have the narrative of Jesus’ resurrection. After Jesus was crucified we have stories of the disciples trying to return to what was their “normal” life BC, before Christ. What we see in the post resurrection appearances of Jesus to his followers is that he won’t let them do that – to return to life as normal. Instead he calls them to something radically new and different, and sends them out to make a difference in the world.

While we have all worked hard to stay connected as a community of faith during these days of separation and isolation, we yearn for some sense of normalcy as a church as well. I hope and pray that God will use our faith community in some radically new and different ways as we begin to come back together in the months ahead.

On March 22 I stood in our chancel, joined only by Dan, JP, and Jason, and preached my first sermon looking into a camera that was flanked by empty pews. It certainly didn’t feel normal. I will never again take for granted the joy of preaching face-to-

*When this is over,
may we never again take for granted
A handshake with a stranger
Full shelves at the store
Conversations with neighbors
A crowded theatre
Friday night out
The taste of communion
A routine checkup
The school rush each morning
Coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring
Each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself.*

*When this ends,
may we find
that we have become
more like the people
we wanted to be
we were called to be
we hoped to be
and may we stay
that way – better
for each other
because of the worst.*

Announcements

EASTER ASSISTANCE OFFERING

Amid the current crisis, the church Session voted to redirect our traditional Easter Flower and Music offering to address the needs in our local community, particularly among those most affected. At this point, over \$37,000 has been raised through your generous gifts and is going to local agencies assisting people during this difficult time – Open Door Medical Center, Carver Center, Bread of Life, and Lifting Up Westchester. Thank you all for your great generosity of spirit!

While so many were generous in making this assistance happen, we here acknowledge gifts that were given with dedications before we shifted the offering to Easter Assistance:

Karen Beatty

In loving memory of Dick Byron and Brian Lyski

Daya Carunia

In loving memory of Dick Murdoch, Joan Kellogg, and Jackie Blanchard

Meg and Demarest Duckworth

In loving memory of our parents, Janet and Roy Duckworth, and in honor of Meg's mother, Dorothy Holmberg

Melinda and Carl Friedrich

In loving memory of Carl Friedrich, Sr., Joseph Karp, and Dale Karp

Elizabeth and Donald Garrett

In loving memory of Beverley Feeney

Janet Gerrish

In loving memory of Janet and James Hester and Thornton Gerrish

Minna Kermelis

In loving memory of her husband, François-Georges; son Christian; and mother, Ina Frick

Katherine and Peter Olsen

In loving memory of Dieter Grossmann, Gail and Richard Sullinger, and Elsie and Peter Roemer



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 EFFORTS 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 three simple, Rye-based efforts that could really use your help!

- Sew Happy is making and delivering masks to medical personnel in the area. You need not know how to sew to lend a hand. Please click the link below for detailed instructions on how you can help (kids can get involved, too!). www.sewhappyusa.net
- As you know, medical personnel are working around the clock AND local restaurants/eateries are suffering without being able to operate as usual. RPC member, Erika Lee, is coordinating a DOUBLY-BENEFICIAL effort and collecting donations to deliver meals FROM our local restaurants TO our local medical staff members. If you'd like to contribute, no amount is too small! Please Venmo Erika directly at erika-lee-37 and make a note in the comments that this is a "RPC food donation." Any questions, please email Erika directly at epandoesq@aol.com. In both cases, anything you can do will 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>.

Both efforts will need to maintain over the long haul, so you're definitely not too late!



NEW 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 ordeal. All can share anonymously, but please keep in mind that it is a public forum.

Sesquicentennial Service Challenge, “The Voting Booth” Book Discussion

Volunteering at RPC . . .

Reflections on Coming Home

by Lars Ernst

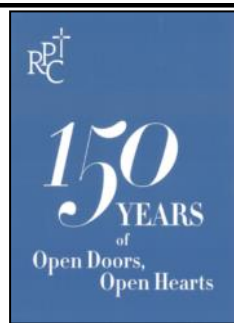
As the world around us literally pauses to combat the effects of the coronavirus, perhaps never before has the value and importance of “community” felt so pronounced to me. We are social, spiritual beings who desperately need connection and a sense of purpose and this pandemic is challenging those essential elements of humanity. These are undoubtedly trying times. When I reflect on my experience of having been involved in the Coming Home program at RPC over the past few years, it is the sense of connectedness that Coming Home has brought into my life that I cherish the most.

Coming Home started in 2016 and was a natural extension of RPC’s long-standing prison ministry programs. As a life-skills empowerment program, Coming Home provides a nurturing, supportive environment to help formerly incarcerated individuals re-acclimate to life on the outside and literally

“welcome” them home from prison. As a community we celebrate victories both big and small and get to witness remarkable moments of vulnerability and resiliency. Together we have witnessed the transformative power that a shared, collective experience can have on a group of people coming together for meals over an 18-week period. Somewhere along the way we become acutely aware that we are more alike than we are different and that we all need anchors and a supportive network to navigate our lives. Perhaps one the most unexpected gifts of Coming Home has been that the people giving of their time to contribute to the program’s success have found themselves on the receiving end of the program’s many blessings time and again.

Coming Home has brought me closer to my fellows, expanded my sense of community, and has filled me with a renewed sense of purpose. It has helped remind me that I am part of something much bigger. In many ways Coming Home has brought me closer to God and has somehow brought me closer to the man He wants me to be.

Lars Ernst is a Coming Home Mentor and current church elder.



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: 136,884

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



The Voting Booth: A new vision for Christian engagement in a post-Christian culture.

Tuesday, May 5, 7:30 p.m.

Via Zoom—contact [John Miller](#) for link

This brief work is presented as a three-act play and reads somewhat like *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, the Christian allegory written by John Bunyan.

How should a Christian relate to the culture? For generations, Christians have been told to either escape the culture to avoid its ungodliness, or to aggressively engage the culture by seeking power and control over it. But are those a Christian’s only options? *The Voting Booth* presents a third path for a new generation of Christians seeking to love both God and their neighbor.

We meet the main character, Christian, on Election Day as he considers his vote. His struggle is an internal one more so than with the candidates themselves. He understands their respective visions for the country, but he doesn’t know what future he wants and how he should live and vote in a post-Christian culture.

Dr. Miller will facilitate the discussion via Zoom. Please email him at jmiller@ryepc.com if you would like to participate. He will email you the monograph and the Zoom link.

Christian Education, Confirmation



Sunday School

In the midst of all that is going on with coronavirus (COVID-19) and social distancing, please know that we are here to support you and your families. If you ever need any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to [Rev. JP](#), or one of our co-pastors.

We also hope to continue supporting you through our weekly Christian Education newsletter. Each week we are sending out resources to help you keep your children engaged alongside a variety of ways for you and your family to experience God at work in your everyday lives. During this time, we are sending the newsletter out on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. to serve as a reminder for online worship at 10:00 a.m. and to provide engaging and creative resources for children that are connected to each Sunday's scripture and focus.

If you wish to receive this newsletter and these resources, please email [Rev. JP](#).

1st Grade Bibles: While we may not be able to hand out bibles to our first graders on Mother's Day this year, we still hope to give them out whenever we get the chance to do so. If you would like your first grader to receive a bible inscribed with their name in it, please let [Rev. JP](#) know if you would like one and how you would like your child's name to be inscribed in it as soon as possible.

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": Each week during this time of social distancing, we will "gather" on Zoom on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. for games, movie nights, and spiritual practices!

High School Youth Group

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: Each week Rev. JP will go live on our Instagram account at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays to share a brief devotional that will include scripture, a short message, and some form of prayer.

-Wednesday Zoom Check-In: Join us on Zoom each Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. for a midweek check-in with each other during this time. If you would like to join us, please contact [Rev. JP](#) for the Zoom link.

Senior Bibles: While we may not be able to hand out bibles to our high school seniors on Mother's Day this year, we still hope to give them out whenever we get the chance to do so. If you are a senior who is interested in a nice portable

bible inscribed with your name in it, we'd be more than happy to have one for you! Please let [Rev. JP](#) know as soon as possible if you would like one and how you would like your name to be inscribed in it.

Confirmation 2020

Like so many other things in all our lives, the track of Confirmation this spring remains up in the air. Already we have pushed Confirmation Sunday tentatively to June 7, but whether that will happen, who knows? In the meantime, at the beginning of May the class will be handing in their statements of faith and then meeting with a church elder to talk about their year and their readiness to confirm their faith.

The class is also now scheduled to meet on Sunday, May 17, at 4:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. – our final discussion about the life of faith and a time to wrap up final details and plan worship for Confirmation Sunday. The class is also scheduled to meet with the entire Session, and, if prepared to do so, be voted in as the newest members of Rye Presbyterian Church on Wednesday, May 27, at 8:00 p.m.

If we can worship together in June, our schedule will call for a confirmation rehearsal on Saturday, June 6, at 10:00 a.m., with Confirmation to be celebrated at 10 o'clock worship on Sunday. Hopefully, there will be a breakfast on that day at 8:45 a.m. in the Assembly Room for parents and families of the confirmation class.



Music Notes



From Jason Charneski

With the Hope of a Return to Some Form of Normal...

We have cancelled or postponed the special music events that had been scheduled to occur in May.

1. The Chamber Music concert slated for Sunday, May 3, has been cancelled. Details about the 2020-2021 season of Chamber Music at Rye Presbyterian Church will be announced in the summer or early autumn.
2. Jazz Weekend, which had been scheduled for May 16 and 17, has been cancelled. We plan to schedule one within the 2020-2021 program year (likely late winter or late spring).
3. My organ recital, which had been scheduled for the afternoon of Sunday, May 31, is cancelled. The reason is two-fold: a. the continuing unknowns relative to the effects of COVID-19; b. the graduation ceremony for Rye High School seniors still is slated to take place that afternoon. My plan is to find a date in the early fall (late September?) that will work well.

Looking ahead: Richard Gress, our Knock Intern in Sacred Music, plans to offer a 45-minute organ recital following 10:00 a.m. worship on June 7. Details to come.

In the Meantime, for Your Listening/Viewing Pleasure...

Duke Ellington's Third Sacred Concert (recorded live in Westminster Abbey on October 24, 1973):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwqeT0Fp8YY>

Multiple high-quality videos of the grand organ at St. Sulpice in Paris, offered by 16-8-4 Productions. 16, 8, and 4 are three of the pitch levels of organ/music tone – 8 equals eight feet (the approximate length of an open pipe two octaves below “middle C” that serves as the first pipe in a rank – the tallest ones you see next to/in front of the chancel window at RPC are approximately eight feet in length; 16 equals 16 feet, meaning three octaves below “middle C” as its first pipe; 4 equals 4 feet, meaning one octave below “middle C” as its first pipe). The mechanics of the organ in St. Sulpice remain as they were when the current console and tonal work were completed by Aristide Cavaille-Coll in 1862; thus, you will see the console assistants doing the work of changing stops and operating the expression shades of the enclosed division, while the organist’s only worry(!) is to play the notes.



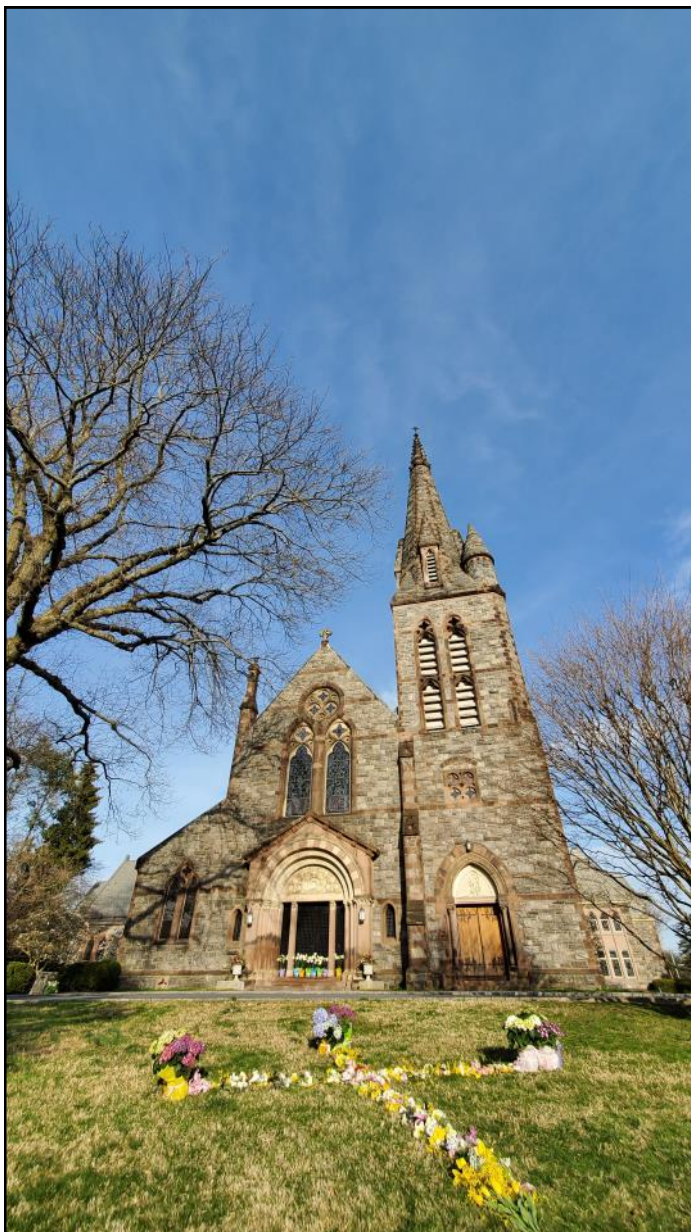
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https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLD_1tFIdUb4IU Au32bzAzGZeev7oReoBn

Jason



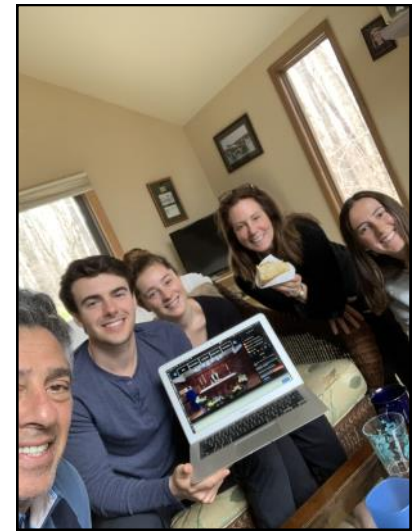
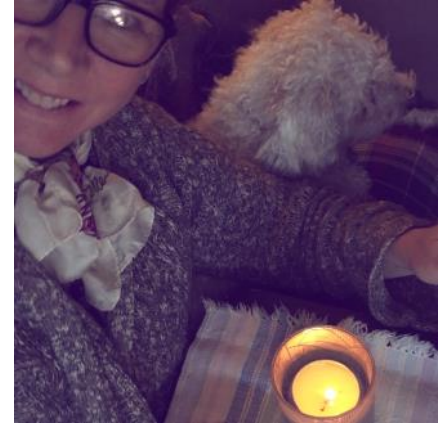
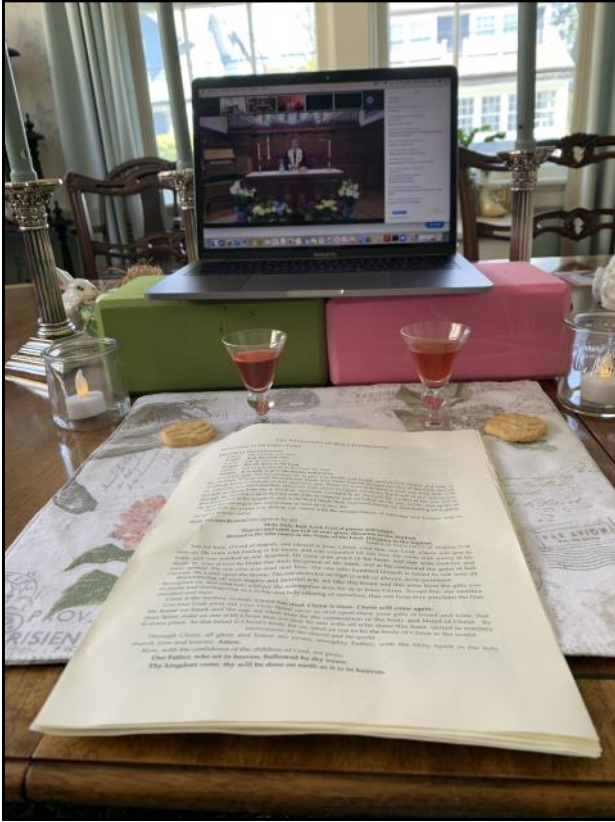
Easter Flowering of the Cross . . .

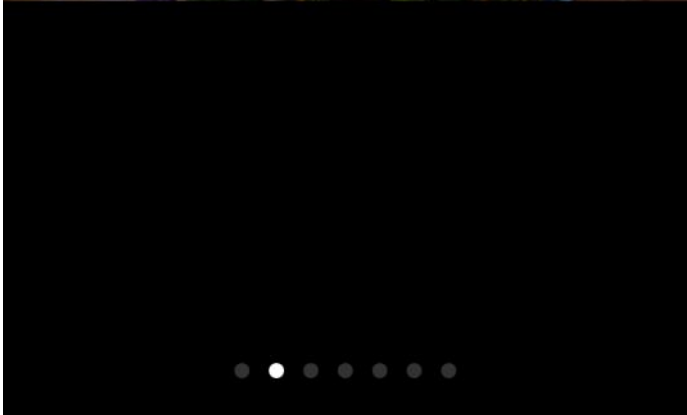
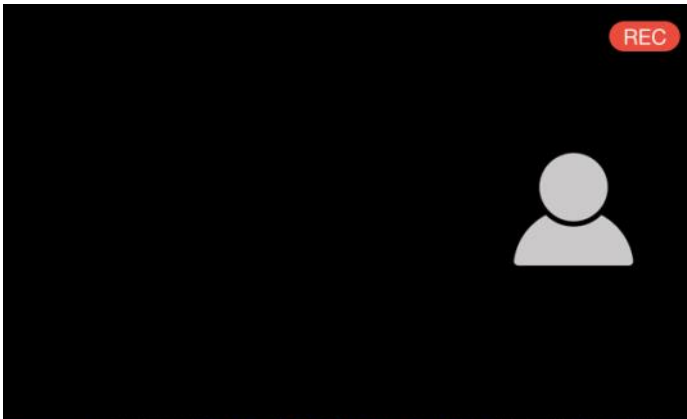




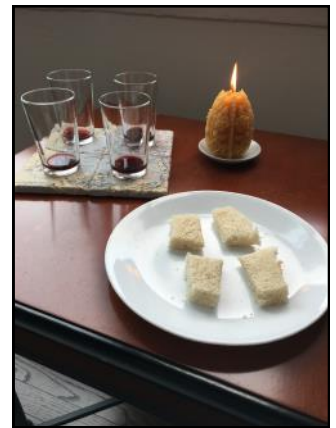
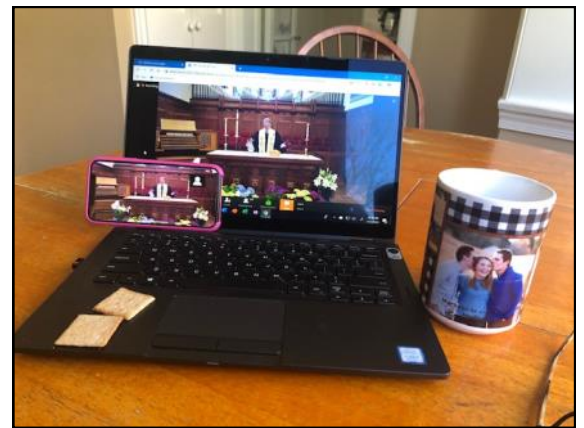
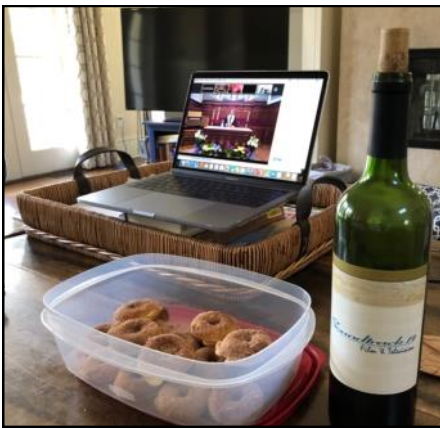
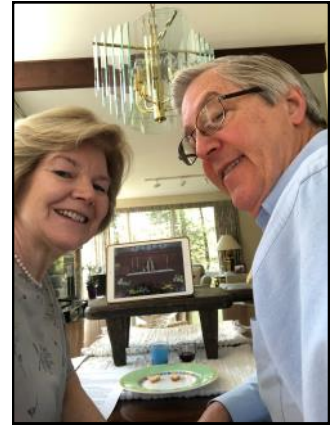
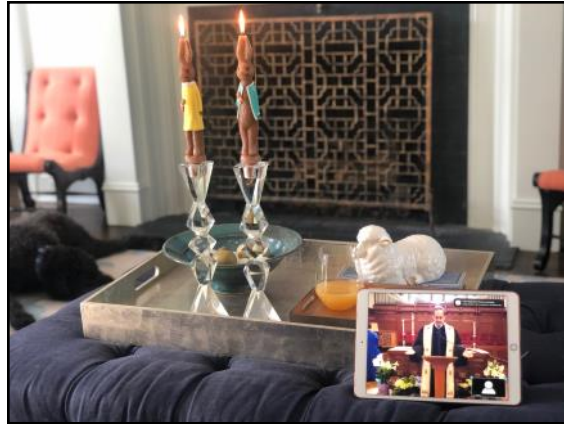


Easter at RPC via Zoom—Worship at Home





Easter at RPC via Zoom— Home Communion



Worship, Bible Study, May Meetings

WORSHIP

**Worship Together Online
Via Live Stream!**

10:00 a.m. Every Sunday

**8:00 p.m. Thursdays
Contemplative Services**

*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!
(Just a note, if your camera is on, you could be seen
by others on the live feed.)

DURING THIS TIME

As this situation develops, if you end up needing assistance of any kind, please do not hesitate to email or call the church to contact with one of your pastors. In addition, our Stephen Ministers and Friendly Visitors stand by ready to give support or just some human connection amid the quiet. Our deacons and others are ready to help as well with a run to the grocery store or pharmacy. Even if the church is closed, together we remain committed to being the church to all in need throughout this time.

**If you need assistance from your pastors, deacons,
Stephen Ministers or Friendly Visitors,
please call the church at
(914) 967-0842 and leave a voicemail with one
of the pastors.
Vocemails go directly to our cell phones.
Dan Love is at ex. 15, John Miller at ex. 14,
and JP Marshall at ex. 17.**

BIBLE STUDIES

Men's Sunday Evening Bible Study

Sundays, May 3 and 17, at 8:00 p.m.
via Zoom – contact [Dan Love](#) for the link

Join in the ongoing journey through the Gospel according to Luke! Please contact [Dan Love](#) to be on the email list.

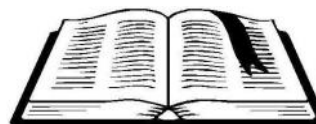
Monday Morning Bible Discussion

Mondays, April 6, 20, and 27, 9:30 a.m.
via Zoom – contact [Dan Love](#) for the link

Join in as we near the end of our Old Testament overview using The Bible Project. Contact [Dan Love](#) for more information and to join the email reminder list.

Saturday Morning Women's Bible Study

Saturdays, May 9 and 16
Via Zoom – contact [Cynthia De Santis](#) for the link.



MAY MEETINGS

Board Meetings

Deacons: Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Trustees: Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Session: Wednesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Adult Education

Book Discussion: "The Voting Booth," Tuesday, May 5,
via Zoom—contact [John Miller](#) for link

Youth

Confirmation Class: May 17, 4:00 or 5:00 p.m.,
via Zoom—contact [Dan Love](#) for links

Connection: Wednesday Gatherings, 5:30 p.m.,
via Zoom—contact [Rev. JP](#) for link

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

High School Youth Group:

Wednesday Instagram Devotionals, 10:00 a.m.

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

Other Church Meetings

3 Ts: May 19, 10:00 a.m., via Zoom. Contact [Jane Micka-tavage](#) (914-967-8622) or [Nancy Steed](#) (914-328-9658).

Mission & Outreach: Wednesday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.,
via Zoom—contact [John Miller](#) for link

Personnel Committee: Monday, May 4, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom
Stephen Ministry:

Leaders: Tuesday, May 5, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom

Supervision: Tuesday, May 5, via Zoom

Thrift Shop: Closed until further notice

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

Worship & Music: Monday, May 11, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Rye Presbyterian Nursery School

Greetings to the RPC Community from Kristin Bassett Kumar

Rye Presbyterian Nursery School is a well-established preschool for over 61 years in the heart of our community. Never in its history has it ever faced a school closure of this length. Since the state-wide school closures took effect, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, RPNS has implemented an extensive distance learning plan for preschool children. It took the creative minds of the RPNS teachers and administrators to put together an online learning platform that would be developmentally appropriate for preschool aged children. RPNS always aims to offer learning experiences that are memorable, child-centered, and create a sense of strong community. Keeping the community connected was essential during the COVID-19 crisis and happens to be a pillar in the Reggio-Inspired Philosophy that the school stands for. Many different curriculum experiences have been executed daily, but two experiences truly stand out.

One afternoon in late March, the Rye Presbyterian Nursery School and Rye Playschool faculty parked their decorated cars in the Nursery School parking lot. Families were invited to drive through the parking lot to see their teachers in parked cars. As the cars drove by, the teachers waved, and cars stopped at a safe distance to engage in conversation between teacher and student. It was a school-wide effort that left many in tears filled with appreciation. It truly was the community that made this happen. Rye City Manager, Greg Usry, supported this effort and RPNS is forever grateful to him for putting the wheels in motion for such an emotional experience.

Another experience RPNS provided for its school community was a friendship mobile area along the fence of the playground. The nursery school students were asked to create mobiles out of wire and recycled materials. The students were very comfortable working with these loose parts since they are typically exposed to them during school days. The friendship mobiles were dropped off and attached to the fence by the students daily. The mobile amounts grew and grew each day. The symbolism behind the mobiles was to acknowledge that even though the students are apart, they can continue to be together by placing their mobile on the fence next to a nursery school friend.

RPNS will continue to travel down this unexpected road with so many others in our country. Anything they can do to keep their school community connected in their mission.



[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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Rye, New York 10580

Tel: 914.967.0842

www.rvepc.com

We are a Stephen Ministry church.