



Friends,

At the Session meeting on Wednesday evening the Session continued to discuss how and when we can resume in person worship. For the time being we will continue to worship “virtually.” When the state of Illinois and CDC indicate it is safe for groups of up to 50 to meet, we will begin offering in person worship as well as live streaming worship. One of the things we have learned during this strange time is that having a worship service online is a wonderful outreach to the community and a gift to members who travel or are unable to attend worship in person. So, live streaming worship will become part of our ongoing ministry beyond the pandemic. When we begin worshipping in person, we know that it will be different. Until it has been determined to be safe, worshippers will be required to wear masks and observe social distancing. But we have also learned that we are an adaptable people! At the request of the Session I am forming a Task Force to plan all aspects of moving to in person worship (when it is safe to do so), if you have interest in serving on the task force please reach out to me. Currently the building remains closed, which means no in person committee meetings.



On Sunday, May 31 we will celebrate Pentecost. As part of our worship we will have virtual communion. An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship* says: *According to the Day of Pentecost story in Acts 2:1-13, God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower witnesses to the resurrection. The Spirit is the “unseenness of God” working among us. Without the gift of the Spirit, Christ’s church dries up and withers away, and we are left with only our broken selves. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible. A spirit-filled community of faith opens eyes to needs in the world and sees its missing as God’s new people. The Day of Pentecost is the climax of the Great Fifty Days of Easter, celebrating as it does the gift of the Spirit to the body of Christ — the church.*

What kind of bread should we use? Our Directory for Worship says: “Sacraments are signs of the real presence and power of Christ in the Church, symbols of God’s action.” *The communion bread should convey fullness — in other words, it should be big enough to hint at the abundance of God’s love, and to suggest that it can satisfy the hunger of body and spirit. The taste or goodness of the bread matters too! Traditionally, wheat bread has been used among Western Christians; however, simple bread made from maize, rice or barley would be perfectly appropriate in other cultural contexts. Whatever the case, the communion bread ought to be delicious, appetizing, inviting, even slightly sweet.* Ultimately the kind of bread does not matter, as long as the bread (and beverage) that are used remind you of the fullness and grace of God. On Pentecost I suggest you throw a birthday party for the church at your home and for communion feel free to use bread, crackers or even birthday cake!

As always, if you are ill or unable to leave your house and need anything, please call me at the church office and leave a message on my voicemail, call my cellphone, or email me at pastor@rpcusa.org. You can also call your Deacon. Know that I am keeping all of you in my thoughts.

Peace, Dale

For information on joining worship on the internet or phone please see the bulletin. Worship is offered on our YouTube channel, and folks can join us on their telephone via Zoom. If you don't have a computer or tablet but do have a "smart" TV, you should be able to go to the YouTube channel on the TV and watch the service. If you would like a DVD of the service please contact me. The entire RPC building is closed. There are no in-person meetings and the only people allowed in the building are those stocking the food pantry and staff on an as-needed basis.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS



ZOOM COFFEE TIME—Sunday mornings after the worship service you are invited to join Zoom coffee time. Here is the information you need to join us.

<https://zoom.us/j/198259471?pwd=VFJmSDJmOE5uK2N0SWtKY2hlYmxKZz09> or to dial in 1(312)626-6799 Meeting ID: 198 259 471, Password: 928313

TITHES & OFFERINGS—The Session is committed to paying all staff during these difficult days. The ministry and mission of the congregation not only continues but is more important than ever. Please mail your tithes and offerings to the church at 116 Barrypoint Road, Riverside, IL 60546. You can also give online.



YOU CAN BE A PART OF WORSHIP – Have you ever wished you could be the liturgist but are uncomfortable speaking in front of a crowd of people? Good news - if you are able to do an audio recording Reverend Jackson would love for you to participate in worship. You could read Scripture, read a poem, offer a prayer or lead the Call to Worship and never have to stand in front of the congregation! Reverend Jackson will provide everything you need. Reach out via email pastor@rpcusa.org.

LITTLE FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS—If you would like to donate canned goods (especially meat), please contact Dale and arrange for drop off. Please DO NOT place items directly in the pantry. All items are being wiped with a disinfectant and then pre-bagged. You can also make a monetary contribution.



THEOLOGY ON TAP Join us Mondays at 7:00 on Zoom for a movie study. For Monday, May 25, please watch *Becoming* on Netflix. Join former first lady Michelle Obama in an intimate documentary looking at her life, hopes and connection with others as she tours with "Becoming." Here is the login information for Zoom for Theology on Tap each week:

<https://zoom.us/j/935547600?pwd=cTV0YTR4YkErT0twWmExUXlTc3ozQT09>

Meeting ID: 935 547 600 Password: 636553

WORSHIP SERIES – In June Reverend Jackson will begin a new worship series called *Prophecies and Pottery: Journey with Jeremiah*. The story of Jeremiah deals with heartache, displacement, violence, helplessness, and homesickness which are part of our story as well. Our faith story invites us to deal openly and honestly with these things, helping us to remember the presence of God and the hope of a better future. We will journey with the prophet Jeremiah during a time of exile in this worship series and encounter the familiar imagery of God as the Potter who can reshape and remake us, making us vessels of living water ready for a brighter tomorrow. A companion book called: *Soulwork of Clay: A Hands-On Approach to Spirituality* is available on Amazon. Reverend Jackson will lead a weekly study on the book. If you are interested contact him at pastor@rpcusa.org



EQUAL EXCHANGE FAIR TRADE ITEMS —We have many organic fair-trade items for sale (tea, coffee, baking cocoa and hot cocoa, chocolate chips and chocolate bars). If you'd like more detailed information on products or to place an order, contact the church office to arrange contact-free pick up.



JOIN THE CELEBRATION! — Please join your RPC church family in a celebration for Susanne Vogel's retirement and birthday! Her birthday and last day of work are June 2, but we will celebrate **Sunday, May 31 between 3-4 pm with a drive-by**. Decorate your car, make a poster, honk your horn as you drive by the Vogel's house at 207 Scottswood Road, Riverside.



MEAL TRAIN PLUS FOR BEDS COVID-19 MEAL SUPPORT

BEDS Plus is presently providing over 4000 individual meals a week to shelter clients, at risk clients/families we have housed in motels and over 100 families and individuals who are housed and experiencing food insecurity. Here are the ways that you can help us provide these services: shelter meals – lunches and dinners, a grocery bag filled with meal items, gift card purchases for grocery stores and restaurants. Here is the link to the website. <https://beds-plus.org/urgent-updates/www.mealtrain.com>