

Greetings from the Roxbury Church! We have missed seeing you in person but please know that you are loved and cared for during these days.

We live in extraordinary times. I, along with many of my clergy colleagues, have had a crash course on distance worship and organizational continuity. Many of you have watched our services online on Sundays. Each week brings a new twist and change as we continually evaluate and refine how we bring the community together on Sunday mornings. Watch for more changes in the weeks to come. Please be patient with us and give us grace as we experiment and seek to remain connected to you and provide the support, peace and connection to God that we all desire and appreciate. We are proving that we can be the church in new ways. The is more than just a building, it is people.

One of the learnings that your staff has had, is that we not make the assumption that everyone is connected with technology or that we are all proficient with using Facebook or Zoom or even have email! So, we are considering sending out a church wide mailing to those who we do not have an email for to keep them in the loop. We will probably move online worship to the Zoom platform which not only simulcasts on Facebook, but also allows phone dial-in for those who want to listen but either can't or don't want to watch a video.

We are looking at ways to have times of Christian Nurture for our children and adults. No plans to announce but we are working on this as well. Note that there are bible study resources for home study on the Church's website. www.roxburychurch.org under the Nurture tab.

On Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m., I am going to offer a Fellowship and check-in time on Zoom. Details will be coming soon.

Committee meetings including Council, Deacons, Trustees and Mission will move to the online platform.

I and a few of the Deacons are reaching out to members to check in and offer any assistance that might be needed. We ask that you consider doing the same with fellow church members and neighbors particularly, the older and health compromised population. If you do, please mention that you are calling as a fellow church member. It is important that you bring that perspective and the church's sincere concern.

The building remains closed for all gatherings, meetings and programs for the foreseeable future.

It has become apparent that we will not have public worship at the church during Holy Week or on Easter morning. Preliminary plans are to have the Easter Sunrise service on line and it to be available for others to play back at whatever time they get up that morning.

The worship service particulars will be adjusted to reflect this change of going to online. Opening words and prayers will not be in unison or responsive in nature. We may have lay readers who can read from their homes to add to the experience. Sandy and I will sign in and “broadcast” from our homes.

After worship, I am excited that we will have the opportunity while on Zoom to have a “Virtual Coffee Hour”. Have your favorite hot beverage and then we can check in with your fellow members, catching up on the latest news, what is helping during these days of social isolation. I am reminded of the words last week of Gov. Andrew Cuomo of NY: “Be Socially Distanced, but Spiritually Connected.

An important and Helpful Note:

The best source of up to date church information is either the church’s Facebook Page

(www.facebook.com/RoxburyChurch)

Or the church’s webpage: www.roxburychurch.org.

The staff continues to work although some remotely. They are available by phone or email

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Please note that both Sandy and I are getting a lot of emails and calls and trying to handle them on a triage basis. So, if you leave a message and we don’t get right back to you, please be patient as we learn how to serve the church in new ways, addressing pastoral needs (or we are practicing self-care and getting rest.) We will get back to you.

Remember that we worship a God that loves us and is with us in all seasons of life. We will get through this with patience, love and grace.

You all remain in my prayers,

Peace,

David