

A Compendium of Considerations and Advice Produced by Presbytery of Donegal Leader Team and COM Members

Singing in Worship

- Until there is an effective vaccine, we discourage congregational in-person singing.
- No choirs until there is an effective vaccine.
- Liturgical leaders singing is OK with no people present or at a distance of 20 feet away from the congregation.
- Use of Worship Teams is discouraged unless social distancing can be safely observed.
- Things we CAN do :
 - Soloists
 - Instrumentalists
 - Music videos
 - Audio music
 - Soloists singing liturgical music (i.e. Doxology, Gloria Patri)
 - Preludes, Offertories, Postludes

Congregational Care

With the understanding that the threat of danger in the yellow phase of reopening is no different than it is under the red phase, the utilization of technology for congregational care should remain primary. If in-person care is deemed necessary, extreme caution should be taken to ensure the safety of both the caregiver and care receiver, following CDC guidelines (including the wearing masks and gloves). In the case of small congregational care services (such as weddings, funerals, and baptisms), the same extreme caution should be taken to ensure the safety of both the caregiver and care receiver, following CDC guidelines (including the wearing masks and gloves).

Programming

- Church nursery care – Children 2 and under are not permitted to wear masks – suffocation risk. Socially distancing with infants/ toddlers not possible – cannot keep young children from putting things in mouths. Disinfecting could not happen fast enough. Nursery care NOT recommended in yellow
- Children's Ministry – will we have Sunday School? Think about the size of your classes. Remember that young children do NOT understand what it means to social distance/ it is hard to keep masks on. Consider, will schools be open at this point (in the fall)? If no, should schools be doing it? Ask: what is the goal of children's Sunday school – can that be accomplished

any other way than in person? Possibly emphasize equipping parents to teach their children at home. Recommend/ surveying parents about what they would utilize/ want/ need.

- Youth Ministry – middle and high school kids can understand social distancing better and can wear masks. Consider small socially distancing gatherings outside according to policies in the rest of the document.
- Fellowship Time – not in large groups. No food (unless pre-packaged and very safely distributed). Maybe in small groups. Encourage outside.
- Recovery groups? – require additional cleaning and maintenance if outside groups come in. Limit outside groups to recommended yellow number size. Social distance must be maintained and wear masks. Have a way of contact tracing—make sure
- Nursery schools/daycare – we didn't get to this one. (my personal gut says this is really complicated – day cares will be necessary for parents who work. what you need to do to keep kids and workers safe will be hard to navigate. Should work with insurance company and state guidelines)

Guidance for Meetings

Sessions/Boards/Committees & Bible Studies/Fellowship Groups

- Recommend continuing to meet remotely whenever possible (Zoom, conference call, etc.)
- If churches do choose to have in-person meetings, they must ensure that vulnerable people who cannot safely attend, and anyone who may not feel comfortable attending, can still participate remotely--by Zooming in, calling in, etc. There are polity concerns with excluding vulnerable populations from the meetings of decision-making bodies, and grave pastoral concerns with excluding vulnerable populations from other aspects of congregational life.
- This would require figuring out tech for hybrid meetings: screens/projectors, speakers, mics, cameras
- If churches do choose to have in-person meetings, all the standard social distancing/hygiene/cleaning protocols and questions apply: wearing masks . . . staying at least 6 feet apart . . . choosing a larger room than the group would otherwise meet in . . . washing/sanitizing hands upon arrival . . . cleaning the space before/after meetings . . . what about bathrooms? . . . consider meeting outside (but that could complicate the tech set-up necessary for remote participation)

Worship

- Door handles: consider propping open or an usher managing entry to avoid having people touching the handle. Ushers should ideally stay 6 feet away from every person, wearing gloves and a mask. Ushers should also have easy access to sanitizing materials. Consider staggering people entering to avoid grouping.

- Paper handouts: Print out songs and other materials. Project words on a screen if possible. Encourage people to bring their own Bibles. Remove Bibles, hymnals, and other common materials (i.e., envelopes, pencils, etc.). Consider keeping a Bible at the front of the sanctuary to remind those gathering of the centrality of the Word.
- Masks and sanitizer should be made available. Excellent signage is available from many companies that reminds people that we are doing this out of love for our neighbors.
- Bathrooms: Consider shortening the service to minimize interactions and bathroom trips. Consider using a bathroom attendant to make sure only one person/family uses the bathroom at once
- Children's messages: consider ways to keep children in place, and have children's messages without gathering children together
- Offering: Baskets at entrances are one possible solution. Churches may also consider continuing online/mail only.
- Sacraments: Up to the discretion of pastors. Pastors who are especially vulnerable should feel free to decline to perform baptisms or other in person sacraments (as well as declining to lead in-person worship). Such pastors may consider asking for assistance from other pastors in the presbytery who are willing and able.
- No food or coffee. Clean light switches, door handles, and faucets after every worship before another group (including another worship service) comes in. For preaching: consider keep congregants 20 feet away from the pulpit (and from soloists) when those leading worship wish to not wear masks.

Pastoral Care Ideas for Individuals in Continuing Care Residential Communities

1. Invite members of the Congregation and leadership team members (Session, Deacons, Stephen Ministers or Parish Visitors, Prayer Teams, Bible Study participants, and other congregational leaders) to **make telephone calls** to each person in the congregation (both active and inactive, as well as regular attendees and visitors). The purpose of the calls are to care for and connect with each person or family unit to make sure they are doing ok under this time of community separation, to offer access to the different ways the Church may be providing services, devotionals and other types of on-line technology to support worship and faith connection. (Attachment 1 provides sample guideline for the calls). This can also offer support resources and pastoral care contact. Every two weeks switch the call lists so that different people in the congregation call the people so they receive multiple calls from members of the congregation during the month.
2. Create a **weekly “Resource Bulletin”** that provides opportunities for daily devotionals (daily scripture text, prayers, written reflection, etc.) as well as other useful ideas (how to make a mask, tips for Mindfulness & Self Compassion, ways to connect with Grocery Stores, food delivery, access to food distribution options (like school district sponsored food giveaway locations) and other important information that people may not have access to from their residential units.
3. Send out **postcards** with a cheerful spring photo and a brief message to cheer their day. (I’ve used photos of flowering trees and flowers on church property, silly photos of my dog, and anything else that will brighten the day of someone confined to their room or apartment.)
4. Invite individuals to participate together **using new technologies** (like FreeConference Call.com, Facetime, or Zoom etc.) in bible studies, video led study groups, prayer groups, grief support groups, choir practice or any other gathering that normally occurs in the church. The Board of Deacons, Session and Youth and Faith Formation Teams meet using this method.
5. **Call people who don’t have access to internet or email to help them participate** in services and Zoom meetings by calling in using their telephones or encourage them to give you the phone number of a grandchild or adult child who can assist them to learn how to use their smart TVs or explore options to see on line worship services on the grandchild or children’s tablets, laptops or cell phones.
6. **Create video DVDs and audio CDs** to mail out to people with the pre-recorded services and devotionals recorded on them so that those without the ability to access the internet can participate in the worship and devotional experiences.
7. When a need for food is expressed, **mail grocery gift cards** to the individuals after calling them to make sure they have the ability to arrange for grocery store delivery or to have someone shop for them.

8. Where communities are completely locked down, **drive to the facility to deliver** books and devotional materials contained in a zip lock and larger grocery bag tied with a knot. Drop the bags at the check-points or front desks of the facilities to be delivered to the resident.
9. Work with sewers and quilters in your congregation to **make masks to mail** to all the members of the congregation who are locked into their residential communities. Other items such as prayer shawls, crocheted crosses, bookmarks and other small items can also be dropped off or mailed to the residents.
10. **Engage members in the residential communities to make masks** to donate to places desiring masks or to donate to the church to be sold to the community using the proceeds to donate to the local food bank or other organizations supporting local mission activities.
11. **Deploy youth and young adults to seniors living independently** to help with outdoor chores and lawncare or other maintenance projects that don't involve entering the person's home – with all participants wearing masks and gloves and practicing 6 foot distancing from any senior resident.
12. **Invite children and teens to create** art work, print off photos, write poetry, short stories or letters to snail mail to all individuals who do not have access to email or the internet so that they receive something each week to brighten their day in their mailbox.
13. Establish times when people can phone into a free tele-conference line or a Zoom **gathering for prayer, sharing and communal connections** with each other. These can be as formal as a Wed. evening prayer service or as informal as a 'Church Chat' or 'Pausing with the Pastor' for checking in and connecting with ministerial staff or youth director or children's ministry coordinator.
14. **Create small group connection call circles** where each person in the circle calls a person in the small group and then the person receiving the call contacts the next person – just to stay in touch, share experiences and offer prayers.

Instructions for making the phone calls

The goal of the call is to share God's love, and Highland's support for each person being called. If there is no answer to your call, leave a brief message on their answering machine. If the phone has been disconnected or isn't in service, please indicate this on the email response summary. Below are bullets for what to talk about, in priority order.

We also want to confirm that we have correct contact information so we can stay connected with people through internet, text and snail mail during this period of 'community separation' and for the future. Your contact list may include the names of adult children who are still listed as living at home, even though they may have moved away. If you see children's names with the status line marked as Ch, please ask the parents if the children are still living in the home, and if they aren't, inquire if the children want to continue to receive contacts with Highland at that same address.

Items for the Phone Conversation

- Connect and share: *Example* "Hi, this is _____ from Highland! I'm calling to see how you are! How are things going for you? (Please call me back) or "Do you have a couple of minutes for us to chat about how you are doing?"
- Update contact information. *Example* "As a community of People Following Jesus, it is important for us to stay connected. We are now offering recorded services on YouTube with links from our website, Highlandpc.org, or you can go to Highland's YouTube Channel. We are also able to conduct on-line meetings and small groups! I'd like to verify that we have your correct email address and cell phone and make any address updates that we may not have correct in our data base."
 - Our contact records indicate that your address is:
 - We have the following phone number. Would you be willing to provide us with your cell phone number? _____ (If they have changed their phone number or disconnected the land line we have for them, please make sure to get the new number(s).
 - We have the following email. If this isn't correct, would you please give me your current email address? _____
 - We show the following children living with you in your household: Are they still residing with you? Can you provide us with their current contact information (address, cell phone, email address) if you think they still want to receive regular contacts from Highland?
- Current Healthcare Support Status: *Example* "How are you feeling? Are you concerned you might be at risk of getting the virus? Do you have access to your primary care doctor's phone number and where to go if you feel you need to be tested?"

- Current Personal Support Status: *Example* “Do you have local family members, friends, and neighbors nearby to assist you in a medical emergency? Would you find it helpful for Highland to have your emergency contact number in the event of an emergency?”
- Pastoral Care Support Needs: *Example* “Do you have a need for contact with Highland’s Parish Visitors, Deacons, Pastor, or to be put on our Prayer List or Prayer Chain? Do you have access to a computer, tablet or cell phone so that you can watch Highland’s on-line devotions and worship services?”
- Community Support Needs: *Example* “Do you have need of support for food, medical support, transportation, or physical contact from a care-giver or phone visitor?”
- Online Technical Support Needs: *Example* “Could you use support for how to use Highland’s new on-line technology?” including:
 - On-line contact by email or email blasts
 - Highland’s website
 - Highland’s worship services on YouTube
 - Internet Zoom videoconferencing and conference phone calls
 - Highland’s Facebook Page
 - “Families @ Highland Facebook Page
- Can we send you our new resource bulletin with information to help you receive?
 - daily devotional and prayer support
 - emergency health services,
 - food distribution locations,
 - pharmacy & grocery delivery options,
 - opportunities to support friends, neighbors, and others needing support during this time of community separation.
- Is there another way that those of us at Highland Presbyterian Church could support you at this time?

Thank you so very much for your time in having this conversation with me! I will keep you in my thoughts and prayers. If you need anything, please contact the church at 717-569-2651.

Daily Devotions for Week of April 12 – April 18 *

(Each day read the passage, the prayer and one of the bullets as you reflect)

Scripture: Isaiah 55:10-12a & Matthew 13:18-23

Prayer: “O God, full of compassion,
 I commit and commend myself to you,
 In whom I am, and live, and know.
 Be the goal of my pilgrimage, and the rest by the way.
 Let my soul take refuge from the crowding turmoil
 of worldly thought.
 Beneath the shadow of your wings,
 Let my heart, this sea of restless waves,
 Find peace in you, O God.” Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

Reflect:

- The Word of God is like a seed. What seed is God giving you? Imagine what the seed looks like – its color, its shape. What will it take for it to break open and grow in you?
- Nourishment of the seed is important. What do you need to nourish the seed of God’s word in you? Ask God for that in prayer.
- What word or phrase from scripture speaks to you today? As you go about your day how does this word or phrase enable you to have peace and joy?
- Imagine the seed as it is produced in you to grow into a fruit that will be yielded in God’s time. What kind of ‘bread’ will it produce in you? How are you called to share this ‘bread’ with others?
- What do you need from God to support this fragile seed from the Word? Imagine yourself having all the support that you need from God. How do you show God thankfulness for the rocky soil as well as the good soil?
- How do you understand God’s desire for you to bear fruit in abundance in your life? To what response is God calling you?
- Name specific joys and concerns you desire for God to bless as you grow as “a harvest of righteousness” to God?

*Harvest of Righteousness by Rebecca Bradburn Langer. Geneva Press, Louisville, KY, 1999 (p.50-63). Used with permission by the author and Presbyterian Publishing Corporation.

Using Our Five Senses to Express Gratitude

What five things are you grateful for that you can 'see'?

What four things are you grateful for that you can 'hear'?

What three things are you grateful for that you can 'smell'?

What two things are you grateful for that you can 'taste'?

STOP – Pausing to Respond

S – Stop, pause, set it down, look away, disengage

T – Take a breath, feel the full cycle of breathing in the body

O – Observe first bodily sensations, then thoughts and emotions. Be curious.

P – Proceed! What feels like a wise next step?

Keeping A Gratitude Journal

Researchers have discovered that being grateful for all the blessings you have acts as a natural antidepressant. Keeping a journal for 21 days can lead to lowered anxiety and more peacefulness and being calm. Here's how to make a gratitude journal.

- 1. Find a small spiral bound or cloth journal or notebook. If you desire, decorate it in your favorite colors, stickers or whatever brings you joy!**
- 2. Three times a day, pause to write and reflect upon what you noticed, were curious about or things for which you are grateful.**
- 3. Respond to these questions:**
 - **G - For what am I grateful?**
 - **L – What one new thing did I learn or experience today?**
 - **A – What one small accomplishment did I do for myself today?**
 - **D – What one thing brought me joy, wonder, laughter, or happiness today?**

Grocery Store Hours for Seniors

Aldi opens Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. and reserves the first hour of business for vulnerable shoppers. This includes senior citizens, expectant mothers and those with underlying health concerns.

BJ's Wholesale Clubs have a designated shopping hour every day from 8:00am – 9:00am for its Members 60 and over. Clubs will open at 9:00am for the rest of Members."

Costco opens their doors to members 60 years and older every Tuesday, **Wednesday** and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. **Admission now limited to two people per membership card.**

Giant is open from 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 a.m. daily for customers 60 and over. For home delivery: https://www.peapod.com/?c3ch=OpCo%20Websites&c3nid=giantfoodstores.com&_ga=2.89081691.1902339450.1585165364-1423334317.1531932134

Stuaffers of Kissel Hill

<https://www.skh.com/supermarket/explore-our-supermarket-3/stauffers-online-groceries/>

Target reserves the first shopping hour each Wednesday “at stores nationwide for vulnerable guests — including elderly and those with underlying health concerns.

Sam’s Club offers early shopping hours every Tuesday and Thursday from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. for seniors and those with disabilities or compromised immune systems. This includes our pharmacy and optical centers and will last until further notice.

Sav-Mart is currently working on a plan to be able to bring parts or items to your car if you are over 60 or have health issues that put you at risk. We will give you details as soon as management puts this into action.

Walgreens offers free shipping for seniors, expanded drive-thru services for seniors, and a seniors-only hour in-store from 8-9 a.m. every Tuesday. Pharmacy hours may vary by location.

Walmart has one hour set aside each Tuesday for Seniors and vulnerable groups before the stores open for regular business hours.

Weis Markets has not yet set any special hours for at risk groups, but contact your local store by phone to find out for sure. Weis Markets will deliver groceries at: <https://www.weismarkets.com/weis-2-go-online-faq>

Whole Foods Market will serve customers who are 60 and older one hour before opening to the general public. Call to confirm.

Emergency Meals for Students

- [Manheim Township School District](#)
 - * Bucher Elementary School, 450 Candlewyck Road, Lancaster, PA 17601
 - * Schaeffer Elementary School, 875 Pleasure Road, Lancaster, Pa 17601
- Weekdays only: 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

- [Columbia School District](#)
 - A grab & go breakfast and lunch will be available for every Columbia Borough School District student, Monday-Friday this week.
 - Locations: Park Cafeteria Entrance and Taylor Main
 - Time: 9:45 am to 11 am
- [Conestoga Valley School District](#)
 - Grab & go meals will be available for drive-through pickup to CV students Monday and Tuesday this week.
 - Location: CV High School main entrance loop
 - Time: 11:30am-1:30pm
 - Families must show a student ID for each meal.
- [Elanco School District](#)
 - ALL kids age 1-18, regardless of which school they attend or if they're on the meal program, from March 18-27.
 - Locations: New Holland Mennonite Church and Eastern Lancaster County Library
 - Time: 11am-1pm
 - Children must be present.
- [Octorara School District](#)
 - Plans to implement a grab & go meal program will be released [on this page](#) at some point today.
- [School District of Lancaster:](#)
 - SDOL provided grab & go meals for students today, and plans to continue doing so. Logistics will be released [here](#) at some point today.

Other meal offerings:

- Anchorage Breakfast (29 E. Walnut St.) is offering a daily carry-out breakfast between 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.
- Arch Street Center (629 N. Market St.) will provide carry-out meals starting Wednesday, March 18 at noon.
- The Moravian Center of Lancaster (227 N. Queen St.) will be accepting donations of brown bag meals to stand in the gap (include a protein source, some kind of fruit, a pack of crackers or other snack item, a drink, and a napkin along with any other non-perishable).

Daily Quarantine Questions

1. What am I **GRATEFUL** for today?
2. Who am I **CHECKING IN ON** or **CONNECTING WITH** today?
3. What expectations of "normal" am I **LETTING GO OF** today?
4. How am I **GETTING OUTSIDE** today?
5. How am I **MOVING MY BODY** today?
- What **BEAUTY** am I creating, cultivating or inviting in today?


