

Ilion Presbyterian News

April 2020

Pastor Rick Riggle

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I was talking with my doctor this morning, and of course the Corona Virus came up. I said something like well maybe we will at least learn our lessons this time. To which he replied, “we are human, there are some lessons that we will never learn.” The truth of that is so obvious. We do not prepare for disaster because it is too much to think about. Which then got me thinking of another recent disaster.

On the evening of the day the World Trade Center was destroyed by terrorists, a service was hastily improvised in one of the largest New York churches, where crowds of both believers and nonbelievers came together in search of whatever it is people search for at such times—some word of reassurance, some glimmer of hope. Now though we cannot gather together we are looking for those same things.

In the midst of fear we long for hope, when nothing seems right we seek some kind of balance. When our world is falling apart we need reassurance that it will be okay.

At that meeting in New York one of the speakers, a Methodist Pastor, said this, "At times like these God is useless.

When I first read that, it struck me as appalling, words that were almost unforgivable. Then after some time it began to strike me as very brave, and finally as that same God continued to work in me it struck me as true.

When horrors happen, when viruses attack, when our lives are turned upside down in ways we can't even begin to fathom, even though we would love for it to be so, we can't use God to make them unhappen any more than we can use a flood of light to put out a fire or Psalm 23 to find our way home in the dark. Of course useless and unnecessary are not the same thing.

When disasters strike, and the always will, all that is left for us to do is to draw close to God and to each other as best we can, in the same way those stunned New Yorkers did on that terrible September morning, and to pray that, although God may well be useless when all hell breaks loose, there is nothing that happens, not even hell, where God is not present with us and for us. I hope that this is at least one lesson we can learn.

Be safe and stay well,

Pastor Rick

## Updates

For the foreseeable future we will be gazing at one another through the windows of our computer screens. As this is something I have not been well educated in I have had to learn fast and on the fly. Here is an update of the things we are doing.

Sue and I are leading worship over facebook. If you are not sure how to find this please give me a call and I can walk you through it.

I have opened a zoom account for the church, and all meetings will be conducted remotely using this platform, it is easy to use and it works well.

I will be using zoom to provide office hours for a couple of hours on Tuesday and Thursday. This involves me setting up a meeting, and providing you with a number with which you can join. You can do this from a computer or a smart phone and you don't need a camera as it will do audio only.

I imagine that most of you know by now that the Session will be checking in with you periodically just to make sure everyone is okay, or to find out if you have any needs we can help with. This is a time for real honesty and not false pride, so if you need something (remember no one can get toilet paper) let us know. If we can help we will.

Finally we really have no idea how long this is going to last. We are monitoring the news daily to find the best information we can, and as the situation changes we will make new decisions. For now though it seems clear that this is going to go on through Good Friday and Easter. With that in mind we have cancelled the orders for flowers for Easter. We are not sure how we will handle this but if you would like a loved one remembered please send me an email and let me know. We may read out memorials or some other way of honoring those who are already celebrating the resurrection.

I ask you all to please pray for our leaders, that they can come together and find real solutions that help everyone get through this awful time. I also ask you to pray for those foolish people who are still not taking this seriously. We read about them everyday and it breaks my heart for all of us and for them. Of course we will all pray for one another, and do our best to remember we are not alone. Our community is still here, we are just having to figure out how to live that out in a new way, and I know we will.

God bless you all, Pastor Rick

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Dear Friends in Christ,

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Who is in all and through all, and even though it may not seem like it right now I assure you he is in this somehow as well. There has been so much coverage of the coronavirus over the last few weeks and I am sure a lot of you feel overwhelmed and even a bit afraid.

These are things beyond our control, and so we must work with what we have. In that light your session met last night to formulate our response to the current emergency.

Until further notice we will not meet for worship at the church, we are exploring ideas for ways to do remote worship over the internet. As these ideas develop we will get you the details. I will still be keeping office hours for now, this is subject to change as the situation develops. Lesa has been authorized to work from home for now and we are working out the details of what this will look like.

Class Act cancelled until further notice

Thursday Study Group cancelled till further notice

The Lunch Bunch has chosen to continue providing meals for people

We are working on a plan to make soup and sandwich available for the Thursday hot lunch crowd

We will continue to make the building available to AA and Food Sense as long as they request it

The session will be responsible for contacting all members a couple of times a month just to keep track of everyone and how they are and to see if they have any needs

The best information we have now is stay home as much as you can, if you feel at risk and have any need we can help with please let us know.

For now the church is in good financial shape, so if your offering is a problem please don't worry about that. If you do want to send in your offering the US Mail is still delivering (for now)

This is a difficult time but let me assure you that the session and I are committed to seeing everyone through till this is over, and it will be over sometime. I welcome any ideas or concerns you may have. In case you may not have it, my cell is 404-697-6837, and my email is pastorfpcilion@gmail.com.

God bless you all, stay safe and stay healthy. I am praying and hope that you will as well.

Pastor Rick

Session Watch care list

Lynn Backus 865-804-0911

Laureen Mitchell	Lesa Decker	Kim Bigelow
Janet Darling	Jean Sullivan	Sandy Eldredge
Lynne Orendorf and fam	Judy Karpowich	Carol Okusko
Betty Foor	Jane Smithson	Sue Thomas

Steve Getman 315-894-5692

George Dunbar	Lisa, Scott Alexander	Marion Bruins
John Bullis	Steve and Eileen Canipe	Jacob Dufford and Olivia Conklin
Gwen Conroy	Jan and Gary Orendorf	Shaun And Heather Orendorf

Julie Hulser 315-985-0379

Mark Blum	Kathy DeClerck	Debra DeJohn
Elisabeth DelGrego	Milton Elmer	Denise Goodale
Joan Annutto	Bill and Jessica Pope	Sue Thomas

Nancy White 503-729-9212

Jackie Holden	Karen Jones	Eric and Helen Kennedy
Robert and Sheila Kennedy	Marcia and Paul Lynch	Greg and Donna Pritchard
Anita Smith	Sue Thuener	

Don Lamphear 315-894-5247

George Maley	Lee and Kim Maley	Marty March
Jennifer Eldredge	Mary May	Jan McGraw
Tammy Morgan	Shelley Morris	Jean Smith
Julia Soules		

Warren Lennox 315-868-1381

Ted and Lynn Mowers	Pat and Marge Moylan	Sue Nellis
Barbara Noll	Judy Nudo	Peg Olson
Rachel Olson	Richard and Kate Sterling	Don and Jackie Unsinn

George Gullis 315-219-9866

Carol Zutter	Dick Long	Linda Knight
Betty Helmer	Karen Benham	Bob Reals
Sarah Reals	Bob Robertson	Dorothy Bostwick
Tudy Brooks	Dan and Christen Gullis	Cindy Kennedy

Pastor Rick 404-697-6837

Lynn and Sue Backus	Steve Getman	Warren Lennox
Mike Orendorf	Julie Hulser	Joan Matteson
Nancy White	Don and Diane Lamphear	George Gullis

If you need anything contact the session member assigned to care for you and they will get the ball rolling.

If you are looking for information a website I have found most useful is:

[CASP.org/covid19](https://www.casp.org/covid19)

It is from the Christian Association of Southwest Pennsylvania and it is a sort of clearing house for several sources of good information.

Rick has asked our Session members to send short messages of support & assurance to print in the newsletter. I will add them here and on the following pages.

From Warren Lennox: I would like to reassure everyone that this pandemic like all pandemics will come to an end. I believe the people of this country are taking the pandemic seriously & are willing to sacrifice their routine to bring an end to disease. “Hang” in there. This will be over soon. God Bless...Warren

From Steve Getman: My thought for the newsletter can be summed up in one word: **COMMUNITY**. This week as I have called or emailed a few members of our congregation, I received as much support and encouragement as I offered. During this time when “community” has picked up at least one negative connotation as in “community spread infection”, I think of our congregation and how we support each other. We are community in the best sense of that word.

Stay safe. Steve



Prayer List:

• **Men and women who protect us and our freedoms.**

- Cody Adams, Joy Bagwell, Marty Bigelow, Kiersten Barnes/Richard Davis, Linda Cate, Alice Eldredge Crosier, Brianna Nicole, Travis Darling, the Devereese Family, Clifford Dibble, Allan Dickinson, Beverly Doolen, Art DuBois, George Dunbar, Ralph Dupres, Lenore Ebersole, Jenn Eldredge, Phyllis Fasolo, David Flanagan, Sarah Getman, Fran Harrod, Marilyn Hext, Loren Hughes, Julie Hulser, infant Grayson, Dave & Jane Jacquays, Dr. Aimee, Don Lamphear, Amanda Lawrence, Sharon Lennox, Barbara Maley, Marty March, Joan Matteson, Pat & Marge Moylan, Patrick O'Connor, Steve Price, Rebecca, Millie Ritter, Henry Rocker, Dale Rohrer, Barb Ropeter, Lorie Schrader, Jane & Bob Smithson, Angela Traglia, Kirsi Viskari, Darlene Whalen, Ricky Wilson & mom, Gretchen

From Lesa—if you have any prayer requests during this time of quarantine, or want to remove anyone who is much better, please either call or text me at 315-269-6295 or email me at the church at fpcilion@gmail.com OR call Pastor Rick & he will pass the name to me. I hope you all can stay safe while we're getting thru this.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS NEWS from George Gullis

A new heating and air conditioning system has been installed in the sanctuary. Another identical system is scheduled to be installed in the "office" building in a couple of weeks. It would have been sooner but a business in Frankfort has a dire need for boiler repair so I gave the o k to O. C. Boiler to attend to them before us as our emergency has passed.

We are transitioning from steam heat to forced hot air. These are entirely different heating systems and you may notice a difference in how the heat transitions thru the sanctuary. Something we will get used to. A huge difference should also be noticed in the heating bill. Our steam boiler had a rating of one million BTU/hr gas input. One new hot air furnace has a rating of 120 thousand BTU/hr input. So two hot air furnaces would only be 240 thousand BTU/hr consumption. That alone is quite a savings in gas. Our boiler efficiency rating was 70 percent. Each new hot air furnace is rated at 95 percent efficient. In other B & G business, the utility room in the basement is near completion. The sink, counter tops, base cabinets, washer / dryer, toilet and flooring are functional. The shower needs a door installed and the entrance door to the room needs to be installed and trimmed. DONE!

An indoor / outdoor SPRING CLEAN-UP has been scheduled for Saturday May 16th, 9:00 am til ?, with a pizza lunch. An alternate date of May 23rd has been set. Boy scout troop is also invited. Emphasis will be put on removing junk and building debris from the basement. A dumpster will be on site. This plan hinges on the outcome of the medical crisis we are currently experiencing.

Be well and God's favor to all.



"Greetings to our FPC family from Richfield Springs. We miss seeing all of you on Sunday ;morning, as you have become our family. Our daily prayers are for health, peace of mind, and a positive outlook for all of us for the future. "People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed. Never throw out anyone." (-Audrey Hepburn)

If someone comes into your mind, take a moment and send them a text or make a phone call so they know they are not forgotten.

Hoping we'll be able to get together soon.

Susan & Lynn Backus

BAG LUNCH PROGRAM WILL BE ON HOLD UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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