

THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in the City of New York
Pastoral newsletter for August 2020



This is church!

Dear Friends in Christ,

I will be heading off on vacation Sunday August 9, sometime after our Zoom worship gathering. But though I'll be even further away from you than usual (I'm planning some beach time), I will carry in my mind's eye little pictures of your little shining faces with me!

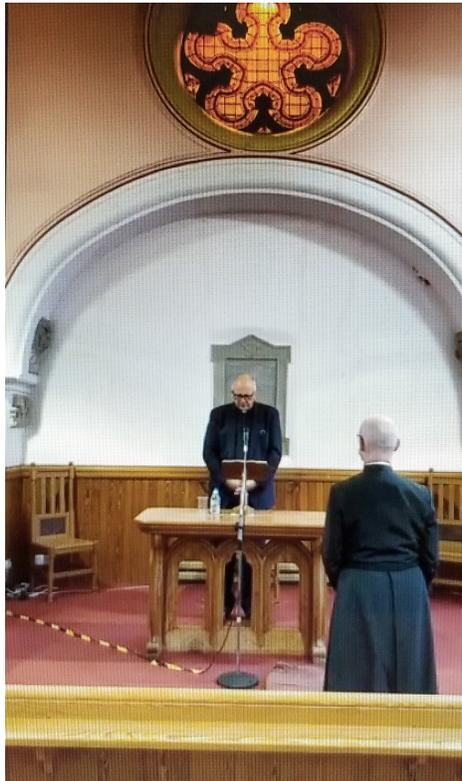
Although I admit I'm eager for some time off (remember Jesus trying to get away for some downtime?), I am so proud of the commitment and energy and creativity and work and love all of you have contributed over these past few months, so that we could keep being church. I'd like to say there's a light at the end of the tunnel - and there is, but I really don't know that I can glimpse it yet. We can only trust that God will see us through - and teach us a few things along the way. So let's keep on keeping on - and when we do get back into the sanctuary, let's not lose the depth and richness we've discovered throughout these endless days of COVID.

You'll be in good hands while I'm off. See **LOOKING AHEAD** for worship details. And for pastoral care, I trust you all to look after one another. But if you need to reach me in an emergency, the best thing to do is text me - or reach out to Nancy Hughes or Virginia Danner (see below), and they will track me down.

Meanwhile, some of us have been talking about an in-person social event, in Central Park, probably. We could gather, masked and appropriately distance - but at least we could see each other irl! (That's "in real life," by the way.) What do you think? What about the afternoon of Saturday September 12 - right before we "re-gather" (though not in person yet) - for fall worship? We could make a weekend of it! Feel free to send me an email, and I'll look forward to seeing your thoughts when I return.

And below is a reminder that it's not just in New York City that worship is different. On Friday August 7, Facebook livestream broadcast the Induction service of our former neighbor, the Rev. Alistair Drummond, as new pastor at the Kilmuir & Logie Easter Church of Scotland. There were a few "essential church workers" present in person - and Alistair's new congregants, plus others (like me) witnessing from near and far. In this most urban of cities and in rural Scotland, Presbyterians are staying safe and smart.

And this is church!



Screenshot from the Induction service of the Rev. Alistair John Drummond, as new pastor at the Kilmuir & Logie Easter Church of Scotland. (Sorry - our friend Rev. Drummond never did turn around and face the camera!)

A Word about Stewardship

Many thanks to all who are able to keep up your financial support of the church in these testing times - and prayers and understanding for those who can't.

A lot of you have switched to online giving - I have! But for those who prefer to send your offerings through the U. S. Postal Service, please put ATTN: Iza on the envelope, so that our bookkeeper, Izaora Bulica, will be sure to see it, and it won't languish in an unchecked mailbox.

Thank you!

And about staff...

Our dear friend Virginia Danner will continue on as the Second Presbyterian Church Administrator, for which we are supremely grateful! Virginia will work from home, for 12 hours a week - and once we get details worked out, including phone and email set up and working smoothly, we'll share with you all. So more on Virginia to come.

Meanwhile, vdanner@secondpresbyteriannyc.org should be up and running.

Harold Stover in Concert!

I just heard about this, and it happened last week, but you can watch here (the concert itself starts around the 10 minute mark):

<https://venue.streamspot.com/video/2a8519eb4c>

The Pandemic Players Lunchtime comedy courtesy of Bram Lewis's Schoolhouse Theater!

In a world without theater, The Pandemic Players will do their best to replace it through a series of Zoom-readings. While you won't have the thrill of fighting over the armrests in a theater, you'll still have the transformative experience of a live performance.

Fridays at 1 pm, through August 28

Click here for schedule, Zoom link and more information:
<http://siteline.vendini.com/site/TheSchoolhouseTheater.org/>

LOOKING AHEAD

Minister of Music Eunjung Ahn and Interim Pastor Rev. Lindsay Borden will be on vacation August 10 – 23.

Sunday August 16: Stay at Home Worship on the website will feature a music video chosen by Eunjung, and an audio recording of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preaching at Riverside Church NYC, on August 13, 1961: "Paul's Letter to American Christians." It is a bit longer than my sermons of late - you may want to tune in at 10 am.

The 10:45 Prayer and Fellowship Zoom will be hosted by Nancy Hughes.

Sunday August 23: Stay at Home Worship on the website will feature a music video chosen by Eunjung and a sermon video by the Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago: "The Cross and the Lynching Tree: A Requiem for Ahmaud Arbery." (You may have seen it before, but I've found it bears repeated viewing.)

Again, you may want to tune in early.

The 10:45 Prayer and Fellowship Zoom will be hosted by Gordon Bakulis with co-host Elaine Song.

Wednesday, August 26: Wednesday Monthly Prayer meeting, 12 noon. All are welcome! Please contact Vivian or Karen.

Sunday, August 30: Lindsay and Eunjung will be back! Podcast on the website, Prayer and Fellowship on Zoom at 10:45. It will be good to see all y'all!

Sunday, September 6: The church will be "closed" for the Labor Day holiday: no online worship podcast or Zoom gathering.

Saturday, September 12: TENTATIVE. 3 pm (or thereabouts), in-person fellowship gathering in Central Park.

Sunday, September 13: Zoom Communion will be celebrated. **PLEASE NOTE: Starting this day, Sunday Zoom gatherings will begin at 10:15** to start getting us used to returning to our usual worship time (once we're in-person, we'll have to get up even earlier!). The Zoom Communion service will be recorded and posted on the website *afterwards*. On other Sundays, you may go to the website earlier, or listen after Prayer and Fellowship.

Sunday, September 20: SAVE THE DATE! After our 10:15 Zoom Gathering, we will join in a Congregational Conversation hosted by the Mission Study Team, to brainstorm about the SPC Mission Statement.

We'll consider things like: What words would you use to describe the church? Our anti-racism group discussed the importance of redefining church for the 21st century, and

making it clear that we're here to work for justice. Do you agree? Should we should say we work for justice? Thinking about who our neighbors are, what other words would you use to describe what you want us to do for the community? What is the theological basis of our mission statement? (What do you think is God calling us to be and do?)

Before I leave on my vacation, I share a photo of Deacon & Beadle Roger Simpson on his recent vacation, visiting his daughter - and his two adorable grandchildren! Even in the Summer of Covid, this can still be a season of family blessings. I wish all of you the joy of family - however you manage to gather, and whatever family looks like for you.



God be with you, until we meet again.

love and light,
Rev. Lindsay