

Good Tidings

Northminster Presbyterian Church ✠ Sarasota, FL

Mid-March 2020



KEEP
CALM
AND
WASH
YOUR
HANDS

941-355-4729
www.npcsarasota.com

pastor@npcsarasota.org
office@npcsarasota.org

Pastor's Corner

These are unprecedented times. I can tell you that I have never led a church through such a time, but I am thankful it is not my church. Jesus is still Lord of the church. The Holy Spirit still leads us. Our God is still seated on the throne. Thanks be to God!

I wish I had a crystal ball to tell you how long all our schedules will be disrupted, but I don't. I urge you to use an abundance of over-precaution in all your choices. We must do our part to protect our hospitals and our medical workers. It is a small price to pay.

With the recent call to avoid gatherings of 10 or more, I will recommend to Session that we suspend our Sunday morning services until further notice. This decision will be re-evaluated weekly. We have also suspended all other gatherings at the church. Staff will be working from home a bit more, though Isabel will still be in and I will be in at times.

It is imperative that you reach out and let us know how you are doing and how we can pray for you. The Deacons will be ramping up phone contacts with all of you, so please take the calls and let us know how to pray for you. They will keep me apprised, and I will make emergency visits only.

We WILL broadcast our Sunday Morning Service at 10:30 each Sunday. A small team will gather at the

church for this purpose. The broadcast will be available via Facebook Live. You do NOT need a Facebook account to view these. They are available to all. Go to our website – npcsarasota.com – click on the Facebook button on the right – it will take you to the page. Once there, scroll down until you see the live broadcast.

You can view this at any time. The broadcast will be available on that page during and AFTER the event. Again, you do not need an account to view the broadcasts.

Monday through Thursday at 10:00 a.m., I will be holding a brief prayer service using Facebook Live, as well. You can leave prayer requests in the comments. These will also be available during and after the event.

Please make an extra effort to call those in the church and check on them. I eagerly look forward to all of us being together again and lifting our voices in worship. That will be a treat!

Thanks be to the Lord of the church!

In His Service,
Pastor Wally

NORTHMINSTER'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

On Monday, March 16, President Trump called for all Americans to refrain from gathering in groups of more than ten people, for fifteen days.



"I hadn't planned on giving up this much for Lent."

To that end, all meetings and gatherings at Northminster have been canceled until further notice. Our outside groups: Tai Chi, Rose Group AA, and Al-Anon, have all been advised that our buildings will be closed during that time. The Suncoast Concert Band and Jazz Ambassadors have ended their concert season early. A private rental has been asked to reschedule.

There will be no on-premises committee meetings, choir practice, Bible studies, etc., until further notice.

The situation continues to change and our response will be updated according to recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and other reliable sources.

New Ways to "Do Church" Together

Desperate times call for desperate measures.

Interestingly, this phrase is widely attributed to the ancient Greek physician, Hippocrates, who wrote, *"For extreme diseases, extreme methods of cure, as to restriction, are most suitable."* We are, right now, facing an extreme disease, and the restrictions being recommended, even ordered, are extreme, like nothing we have seen before.

The following technologies are being introduced to help us keep connected and worship together. There are some new, and not-so-new, procedures.

VIDEO STREAMING: As Pastor Wally said, on the front page, he and a small worship team, will conduct a worship service at 10:30, every Sunday, which will be broadcast live and will also continue to be available for later viewing. This is so easy to access! This is a Facebook application—but you do not need a Facebook account to

view it! You can access this on a computer, tablet, or smart phone.

CONSTANT CONTACT: This bulk email service is replacing our weekly E-Letter and E-Blasts. We had been having difficulty with the reliability of our former service and decided to make this change now so that everyone can get important notifications. This communication will simply show up as an email from Northminster.

ZOOM: Important meetings will not have to be canceled. Zoom is a video conference call service that we have already tried out for staff and Session meetings. Links to the Zoom conference call will be emailed to those who will be involved in each case.

SOCIAL DISTANCING: This isn't a technology, but it is different than the hugs and handshakes normally shared at church. Try to maintain six feet between yourself and others.

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

ISAIAH 41:10



Online Giving

Have you checked out our Online Giving option? This is an easy and reliable way to make sure your regular giving plan continues, even when you can't come to church. Whether it is the current temporary suspension of services on campus, or you are away for vacation or have a seasonal residence, Online Giving ensures that your contributions are received regularly, on the schedule you designate. You'll also be able to check the status of your pledges and gifts at any time, from the comfort of your home.

Go to Northminster's website, www.NPCSarasota.com, and click the Online Giving tab at the top of the home page. From there you can print easy instructions on how to sign up or you can go directly to the Online Giving page to register.

New funds will be added soon for the Easter "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering and mission pledges.

Please contact the office if you have any questions.



ONLINE GIVING

Easy

Reliable

Secure



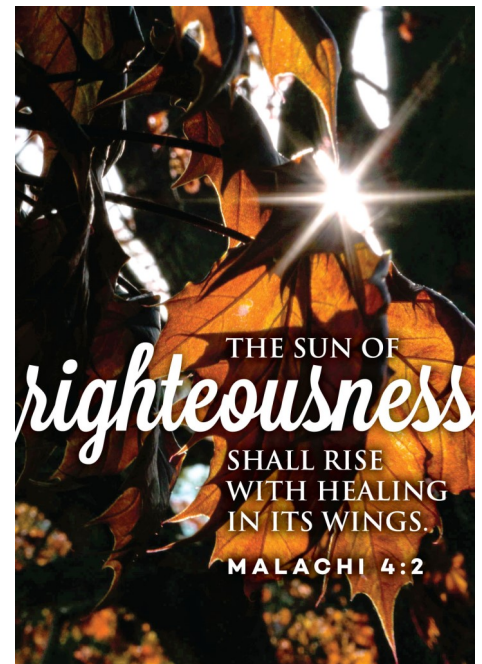
IF YOU GET SICK

If you think you have or may have COVID-19, the CDC recommends:

- Stay home except to get medical care.
- Call your doctor *before* you get medical care.
- As much as possible, you should stay in a specific "sick room" and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Wear a facemask if you are sick
- When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Routinely clean high-touch surfaces in your "sick room" and bathroom. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but not your bedroom and bathroom.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

We'd like to add: Please call your Deacon or the church office to let us know if you become ill and if you are staying home or being treated in a hospital. You will be added to our prayer chain.





The Church with the Red Roof

**Northminster Presbyterian Church
3131 61st Street
Sarasota, FL 34243-2542**

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #526
Manasota, FL

"In God we trust"

CURRENT RESIDENT

PLACE LABEL HERE

Good Tidings Special Edition

Letter from Pastor Wally

Northminster's Response to COVID-19

New Ways to Be Together and "Do Church"

Online Giving