PRESBYTERIANS AT THE CROSSROADS

Providence Presbyterian Church April 2020



From the Pastor's Study...

"More than Conquerors"

On October 14, 1735 John Wesley, and his brother Charles, set out for Savannah, Georgia from Britain. While onboard ship there arose a horrific storm and John Wesley feared for his life. As he and other passengers huddled in the lower quarters of the ship, a group of Moravians sang hymns and prayed to the Lord, seemingly untouched by the terror around them. This touched Wesley deeply and he was convicted by their assurance of God's grace in the midst of a storm which could have easily taken their lives by sinking the ship. When he returned to Britain he wrote about how that moment shaped his life. "I asked one of them afterwards, 'Was you not afraid?' He answered, 'I thank God, no.' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He replied, mildly, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.'…I went to their crying, trembling neighbors, and pointed out to them the difference in the hour of trial, between him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not. At twelve the wind fell. This was the most glorious day, which I have hitherto seen."¹

When we are dealing with uncertain times, it is normal to feel anxious and concerned. It's especially hard when we aren't able to go to our normal places of comfort, like church or family gatherings. It's frustrating when we can't answer all the questions which we are being asked. That's normal, and it's understandable to feel overwhelmed at the unknown. But in this hour of darkness and uncertainty, Paul points us to the Light of Christ in Romans 8:35-39:

³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."^[a]

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[b] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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Paul strikes at the heart of our fears, anxiety and worry by calling it out: "What's the worst that can happen? Trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword...Coronavirus? No, the worst thing that could happen is separation from Christ's love. But here is the good news: Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Period.

See, the storm of the unknown is going to rage around us, be it the persecution the early church was living under or the Coronavirus of today, but *God will not let us go*! We don't have to fear the unknown because God holds the future in the palm of his hand. We do not have to be overwhelmed by worry, anxiety or fear because our trust is in God who is greater than anything of this world.

Yes, it's hard to stay upbeat in the climate of the unknown, but know this: nothing, NOTHING will separate you from the love of God and that means that we don't have to fear because God is in control.

Praise be to God!
Pastor Nadia

CHURCH OFFICE

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Pastor's Office Hours

Session approved to close the Church offices through the quarantine starting March 30, 2020. Pastor Nadia can be reached by cell phone, email or schedule a Zoom meeting while she works at home Monday thru Thursday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm and by appointment.

Office phone number is 919-894-4063. If you would like to reach Rev. Nadia Stropich after office hours, please call 937-903-9487 or email her at nstropich@hotmail.com

EPC Q&A

Q: If someone asked me to summarize the EPC, what should I tell them?

A: Great question, especially as word is getting out that we are no longer PC(USA). The EPC can be summarized by "The Essentials of Our Faith" which can be found at epc.org/about/distinctive.

Starting with the belief that the Holy Bible, contained in the 66 books of the Old and New Testament are authoritative over our lives because it is the fully inspired word of God, there are seven things which we will not compromise on as a global movement:

1. We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!

2. Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.

3. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior, indwelling our hearts. He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.

4. Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justifies them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.

5. The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible yet imperfect expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity, where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting she awaits the return of her Lord.

6. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth personally, visibly, and bodily—to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

7. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us." He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

All of this should sound familiar because it follows the same orthodox (right teachings) as the Apostle's Creed which we recite each week in worship and serves as a foundation for many evangelical worshiping communities making fellowship across denominational lines possible.

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It's important for us as members of an EPC congregation to know as well because when someone asks, "What do you believe as a Christian?" it makes a great starting place in the conversation to share about Christ...which is what the mission of all Christ followers is to be!

Keep your questions coming!

- Pastor Nadia



SECRETARY

Cindy Lynch will be receiving email and can check voicemail on the office phone Monday -Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Please send your bulletin prayer requests, updates, announcements, email distribution additions/deletions or other messages for broadcast via email to the congregation to: ppchurchsecretary@gmail.com

or call the office number, 919-894-4063.



Elder Contact Information

David Collier – Personnel davidcollier123@yahoo.com

Kevin Creech – Christian Education kmocreech@gmail.com

Vickie Faircloth – Worship vickiefaircloth@yahoo.com

Carolyn Johnson – Congregational Care cmoorejohnson2012@gmail.com

John Kopanski – Mission & Outreach jkopanski@live.com

Scott Martin – Long Range Planning 19smartin69@gmail.com

Steve Newnam - Property bigfoot15@embarqmail.com

Sam Stephenson - Finance samuelstephenson@me.com

Donna Stolle - Fellowship dms6330@gmail.com

Reverend Nadia Stropich nstropich@hotmail.com

Dear Providence members and friends,

Session met last Monday via computer video chat to discuss how to best minister to the congregation while we are not gathering for worship or other activities. Here are some highlights of that meeting which Session wanted to pass along to the congregation:

- **Christian Education:** For those who are concerned about missing the videos for the Bible in 90 Days curriculum, we have been given the secure links by Scriptural Awakenings so that you can watch the videos at home. If you have not received the email with the links, please contact Pastor Nadia Stropich.
- **Congregational Care:** We have congregation members willing and able to pick up groceries and deliver them to congregation member's homes. If you are in need of such a service, please contact Carolyn Johnson at 919-880-1272 or Pastor Nadia at 919-894-4063.
- **Finance:** The finance committee would like to remind the congregation that you can mail your offering to the church: 14664 NC Hwy 210, Angier, NC 27501. Mailing your tithes and offerings will allow us to continue paying the mortgage and other monthly bills, like the light bill, without dipping into reserve funds.
- **Personnel: Closed office effective March 30, 2020.** It has been recommended and approved by Session to close the Church offices through the quarantine starting March 30, 2020. This means that you can reach Pastor Nadia by her cell phone, email or schedule a Zoom meeting with her while she works at home. Cindy, the church secretary will still be receiving email and can check voicemail on the office phone as well. Brittany and Angie will continue to upload music for worship on our Facebook page; "Providence Presbyterian Church of McGee's Crossroads, Inc. EPC". Pastor Nadia will check on the mail daily in order to make sure that Ann Benson receives all checks and to curb possible mail thief. Please know that your Session is taking every precaution to keep staff and the congregation safe while we are in this new era of ministry.
- Worship: Pastor Nadia will continue to record her sermons. The audio will be available online at our website <u>www.providencepresb.org</u>. A new Facebook account for the church has been created so that we can watch the sermons live on Sunday morning at 11am. You can find the church Facebook page at Providence Presbyterian Church of McGee's Crossroads, Inc. EPC

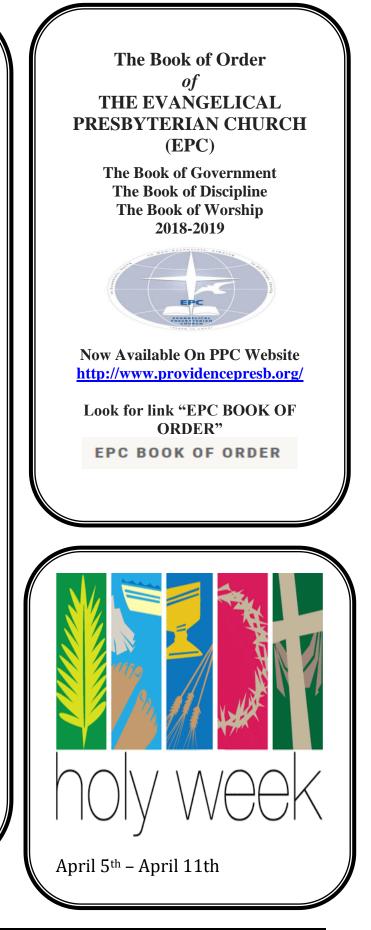
Please note that sermons, anthems and services no longer auto-play when clicking on the link. You must press the play button once you are on the page. Also, it takes a few seconds to begin since it is pre-loading to prevent buffering when listening.

Blessings of health and safety to all, Pastor Nadia and the Session Elders of Providence Presbyterian Church



Easter Service and any Easter Events as of now will be broadcast on our Facebook Page "Providence Presbyterian Church at McGee's Crossroads, Inc. EPC" as well as the audio found on our website providencepresb.org

All face to face meetings at PPC have been canceled at this time due to our adhering to social distancing.



FELLOWSHIP TIME REMINDER

The Fellowship Committee would like to thank the groups who have volunteered for Fellowship time this year.

The Fellowship Committee wants to extend an invitation to anyone or group if they would like to volunteer for the fourth Sunday when we are back to our regular schedules to please contact Donna Stolle at 214-6698 or <u>Dms6330@gmail.com</u>



Prayer Shawls Available

The Congregational Care Committee supplies Prayer Shawls for anyone who may be in need of physical warmth during the Worship Service. The shawls are located in the Narthex.

* After the service, please leave the used shawl on the end of the pew - they are cleaned after each use.



If there are members of the congregation or regular attendees that would like a member of the Congregational Care Committee to call them, please get that information to Carolyn Johnson at <u>cmoorejohnson2012@gmail.com</u>



FELLOWSHIP HALL POLICY

If you would like to request to use either of our Fellowship Halls, Sanctuary or Class Rooms, you will be required to complete a form and the approval will come from the Session. This will apply to all requests. Requests need to be made through the church office with Cindy Lynch, Secretary (it will be marked as "Reserved" until approval is made at which time she will change "Reserved" to "Approved" on the Calendar), or Donna Stolle. If you have questions on this policy please contact Donna Stolle at 214-6698 or <u>Dms6330@gmail.com</u>

Men's Fellowship Group Assistance

Small chores & household assistance is available by the Men's Fellowship Group. To schedule, contact Eric Faircloth at <u>ericfaircloth@embarqmail.com</u>, or 919-201-2696.



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Samaritan's Purse International Relief donations

Mission & Outreach: This is to inform the congregation that during the months of March and April, donations will be accepted for Samaritan's Purse International Relief ("SPIR"). All donations received will be designated to assist the ministry with providing medicine, medical care and related items. These products and services will be mobilized around the world to help those in dire need of medical care. If you would like to donate to this ministry you may mail a check, please designate the ministry by writing SPIR on the memo line. Any amount donated will be beneficial in support of this world medical mission.

Hebrews 13:16 And do not forget to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

SENIOR CITIZEN LUNCHEON

The Senior Luncheon for April has been canceled.

Fellowship & Fitness Group

The Fellowship & Fitness Walking Group walks from 10:00 to 10:30. Some time ago we added the PPC Prayer Group. Those of us who walk stay for prayer. We pray for all request listed in the bulletin. If, however, you do not wish to walk but be a part of the prayer group please join us at 10:30 in the UFH as we reach out to God in prayer for our church family, the Session, the choir, the pastor, teachers, the governments of the world, school and church safety, our military, first responders and each other.

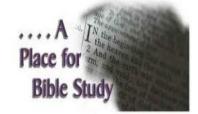
All are welcome!



Gatherings have been suspended at this time but please continue to pray at 10:30.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Chapter of Presbyterian Women's Day Circle and The Presbyterian Women's Evening Circle will not meet this month.



Announcement From Mission & Outreach Committee

Due to the circumstances related to Coronavirus, food assistance pantries are experiencing lower than usual inventories and having difficulty meeting the increased demand. As a result, the Mission & Outreach Committee will be providing a ministry response opportunity to the congregation. The ministry response is to receive food donations starting on March 28th continuing through the month of April. M & O committee members will be at the church each Saturday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and stationed under the drivethrough canopy to receive food donations. All donations will be delivered to West Johnston High School Food Pantry. The food items most needed are as follows:

- Canned fruits, vegetable, meats, and soups (Pop-top cans a plus)
- Whole grain pasta, brown rice, dried beans, and cereal
- Peanut butter and other nut butters
- Fruit cups, juice boxes, granola bars, crackers, popcorn, and sugar-free puddings
- Hygiene items

In addition, as part of the committee's regular ministry programs, during the month of April we will be accepting new or gently used Bibles and other Christian books. The Bibles and Christian books will be delivered to the Christian library international headquarters in Raleigh, NC. Prison Chaplains will distribute the donations to prisoners around the world. In 2019, this ministry inspired over 2000 prisoners to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. The ministry guidelines are as follows:

Accepted Items:

• New and gently used Bibles and other Christian books in English, Spanish, or other languages (paperback materials are preferred).

Items not Accepted:

• Damaged material, over-sized materials, spiral-bound materials, Sunday School quarterlies, magazines, and secular books.

If you would like to participate in this ministry, you may drop off your donations at the church during the same time as designated for the food donations (*each Saturday starting March 28th through the month of April from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm). If you need additional information about the Christian book ministry, you may contact Brenda Abbott at 919-631-6776.

God's Blessings to All

Let's get cooking! PPC Cooking Class

Gatherings have been suspended at this time. There are no April or May gatherings.

If plans resume; Tuesday, June 20th Donna Walker presents her Hamburger's Hawaiian, July 7th Janice Parrish presents her Famous Cheesecake, August 4th Annah Creech presents her White Chocolate Cherry Oatmeal Cookies, September 8th Wendy Stephenson presents her Oyster Stew or Salmon Stew (they use the same base), October 6th Sharon Passe presents Rosettes, and December 1st Brenda Abbott presents her homemade Candy Turtles. If you have questions, please contact Donna Walker via text 910-985-1717.

Please join us and enter through the kitchen door.



PPC KIDZ

Program for 2020



The "PPC KIDZ" program meets several times throughout the year, typically once a month. Check the PPC Calendar for more details on days and dates! This program is specifically designed for children ages Preschool (and fully potty trained) through 5th grade. This is an interactive program that includes a lesson, team building skill and mission activity. The program time is from 4:00 pm till 5:30 pm usually, and a light snack will be provided. We will meet in the UFH and then be dismissed to our classroom or activity. If you have any questions please see Vickie Faircloth or a member of Providence CCE. We hope to resume soon.

Highlight of Minutes of Stated Session Meeting March 9, 2020

Coronavirus Advance Preparation - These steps were agreed upon:

- Stop Passing the Peace during Worship,
- If schools are ordered closed, Providence will cancel all activities, including worship, and
- Remind members that the sermon is recorded and available on line.

Open and Actionable Items

Finance – Session reviewed the Providence February end-of-month financial report. The balance in the Money Market Fund stood at \$188,551.04 and includes \$102,599.69 from the sale of a gift of stock.

<u>Designated Funds</u> – A gift was received of \$1,000 from the Boy Scouts towards the purchase of a projector for the Upper Fellowship Hall. Souper Bowl Sunday donations raised \$1,813 as a gift for Mary Tyler Nordan. The \$21,772.54 remaining in the Homecoming Fund will be transferred to the General Fund to be used to pay the monthly mortgage.

Figures of Interest:	
Loan Balance of \$811,334.16	
Development Fund Balance of \$16,989.08	
Checking Account Balance	
General Fund Balance	\$10,235.27
Designated Fund Balance	\$64,950.70
General Fund Additions	General Fund E

	General Fund Additions	General Fund Expenses
February 2020	\$25,320.18	\$31,360.92
Year to Date	\$63,088.47	\$63,308.26

Recommendation from the Joint Finance and Long Range Planning Committees – Session reviewed a report on a meeting of the loan refinancing sub-committee and First Citizens Bank. The bank is willing to refinance the loan for another ten years at the current 3.6% interest rate. Refinancing fees would be less than \$1,000.

Assumptions include:

- 10-year balloon (the interest rate holds for 10 years but could go up on any remaining balance after 10 years),
- Annual interest rate of 3.6%,
- A \$102,599.69 principle payment as part of refinancing (proceeds from gift of stock), and
- A reduced monthly mortgage payment of approx. \$6,170.00 over 143 months.

Session unanimously approved a motion to move forward with the plan to refinance the loan based on these assumptions. A town hall meeting is planned for March 29 to share information with the congregation and provide an opportunity to for questions. A Congregational Meeting to vote to approve the refinancing plan will be held nearer to the closing date on the new loan.

Other Business

Motions were approved to expand M&O opportunities by 1) collection of Christian reading materials for prison ministries, and 2) collecting donations for care packages for deployed military personnel.

New Member Candidates – Session was reminded of a Called Session Meeting for Sunday March 15th following Worship to examine new member candidates. The list includes Chaz Davidson, Brittany Parks, Shawn Stropich, Frank and Nicole Hughes, and Bill and Monica Jackson.

Next Stated Session Meeting – April 4, 2020

Prayer List of Joys and Concerns

Members of the Providence Family in Long-Term Care:

Marilyn Johnson at Barbour Court Nursing in Smithfield; Bobbie Langdon at Highland Village in Cary.

Persons Living with Cancer, including:

Sherry Baker, friend of Laura Langdon; Joanne Boyle, Bob Zattiero's niece; Lisa Bradshaw, member of the community; Dede Bumgarner, friend of Brittany Parks; Frank Camarda, Uncle of Nicol Hughes; Sherri Cox, friend of Carolyn Johnson; Becky Hall, friend of Carolyn Johnson; Jerry Hall, extended family of Wendy Stephenson; Ann Hargis, community; Jamie Harris, friend of Andrea Jones; Consuelo Hawkins, Joe Hawkins' mother; Sherwood Johnson, friend of church; Norman Nelms, brother of Tom Nelms; David Ryan, coworker of John Pickens; Tim Scarborough, friend of Wade and Carolyn Johnson; Tammy Sullivan, mother of Frank Hughes; Abby Stanley, coworker of John Pickens; Debbie Sturgis, member.

Persons with Ongoing Health Concerns, including:

Ally Abbott, granddaughter of Jim and Brenda Abbott; Nancy Allen, Sheila Dupree's mom; H. A. Andrews, father of Andrea Jones; Sara Barber, mother of Vickie Faircloth; Lauren Collier Bellissimo and family, members; Worth Bowman, member; Patricia Chapin, friend of Carolyn Johnson; Larry Creech, Father of Kevin Creech; Pamela Collier, member; Elise Corona, daughter of a friend of Sue Bryant; Chris Darden and wife, friend of Cathy Simons; Don Dupree, father of Amy York; Barbara Ellis, mother of Georgeanna Phillips; Charles (Chic) and Mary Lou Folkman, friends of Providence; David Guss, cousin of Andrea Jones; John Harris, friend of Andrea Jones; Brian Johnson, cousin of Don Dupree; Harley Kremer, Andrea Jones niece; Bill McClandless, friend of Bob Zattiero; Nancy Nelms, member; Judy Nemeth, friend of Miriam Lambert; Mary Tyler Nordan, daughter of Tyler and Natalie Nordan; Ed & Lou Penny; members; Wanda Presnell, friend of Beth Wolak; Caleb Reese, cousin of Andrea Jones; Stephen Southers, community; Ann King Stephenson, member; Charles Tadlock; friend of Pamela Collier; Joy Wellons, Brandon Mott's mother-in-law; Austin Williamson, friend of Carolyn Johnson; and Eva Younts, Nadine Reed's Aunt.

For Our Nation and Our World, including:

The governments of the world, our school and church safety, our military, and first responders.

Our Christian Sympathies are extended to the families and friends who lost loved ones this past month.



Birthdays & Anniversaries



April Anniversaries

- 4 Pete and Mary Ann Booth
- 17 Travis and Brittany Jones
- 21 **John and Beth Pickens**
- 22 Nathan and Heather Reed
- 23 Hamilton and Debbie Greene
- 24 Wayne and Joyce Lamm

April Birthdays

3 **Carlos Bagley Beverly Martinelli** Tate Nordan **John Pickens**

- Donna Walker 9 Daphne Noles
- Amy Dupree York Sharon Stephenson 10 Margie Taylor
- Kaitlin Faircloth 11
- 15 **Jon Nooney**
- 16 Pat Forren
- **Charlotte Wood**
- 17 Steve Newnam 19
- Will Langdon
- 23 Alexa Rogers
- Joan S. Stuart 24 **Ioshua** Collier Wendy Flesch Leon Parrish
- 27 Lou Penny

Pastor Rev. Nadia Stropich

Session

Class of 2020 Kevin Creech – Christian Education David Collier – Personnel Steve Newnam – Property

Class of 2021

Carolyn Johnson - Congregational Care Sam Stephenson – Financial Scott Martin – Long Range Planning

Class of 2022

Donna Stolle - Fellowship John Kopanski – Mission & Outreach Vickie Faircloth – Worship

Church Staff

Custodial Ray and Jamone Johnson

Music Director/ Organist/Pianist **Brittany Jones**

> **Pianist** Angie Searcy

Secretary Cindy Lynch

Accounting Treasurer Sam Stephenson

Collections Treasurer Ann Benson

> Newsletter **Cindy Lynch**

Sunday School Superintendent **Kristy Stephenson**

> Website **David Nelms**

APRIL EVENTS AND SCHEDULES

PPC Food Pantry



3) paper towels

When the quarantine has ended, please bring your food donations for these worthy ministries and place them in the blue bins near the foyer doors leading into the Upper Fellowship Hall. While all donations are appreciated, the most **buddies** needed items are given below.

Backpack Most Needed items:

1) individual serving/packets of 100% fruit juice

- 2) fruit cups (applesauce, peaches, pears)
- 3) individual serving packets of oatmeal/grits
- 4) soup

FOOD PANTRY MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

1) sugar 2) sugar

- 4) toilet paper
- 5) clothes washing detergent
- 6) dish washing detergent

Donation Option

Providence can accept donations of stocks and other securities.

To make a donation or obtain more information, please contact Ann Benson, Collections Treasurer.

April Upcoming Events



- Apr 4 M&O Collections at PPC 9-12
- Apr 5 Communion Sunday via our website www.providencepresb.org
- Apr 9 Maundy Thursday 7:00 am via website
- Apr 10 Good Friday
- Apr 11 M&O Collections at PPC 9-12
- Apr 12 Easter Sunday Worship via our website Sunrise Service 7:00 am Worship Service 11:00 am
- Apr 13 Easter Monday Office Holiday
- Apr 14 Session Meeting via computer
- Apr 18 M&O Collections at PPC 9-12
- Apr 19 Sunday Worship via our website
- Apr 23 Newsletter Deadline
- Apr 25 M&O Collections at PPC 9-12
- Apr 26 Sunday Worship via our website

Deadlines for the Month:

Bulletin and Friday Reminder Deadline:

Wednesdays, 12:00 pm Monthly Newsletter: 23rd of the month, 1:00 pm

Available on the website:

Quarterly Service List for those who help in Worship. Church Newsletter "Presbyterians At The Crossroads". Sunday Worship Messages and other updates

All face to face meetings at PPC have been canceled due to our adhering to social distancing.

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