

Second Life

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2020

FROM THE PASTOR

BEING GROUNDED IN CHANGING TIMES

This is an odd time for each one of us. During times of change, it is particularly important to be grounded in eternal truths of God and God's love. We may not be meeting in person during these next weeks, but we have many opportunities to continue to be in community. Some of what is so important in these next weeks is developing a sense of consistency and living out patterns and disciplines that order our lives.

Please make Sunday morning worship one of those priorities.

If you have the opportunity, please join us on Wednesday evenings each week for a thought-filled and meaningful dialogue (live-streamed each week).

In addition to taking part in those events, recognize that we will share regular emails each week, both on Monday and again later in the week.

During a time when we don't have as much contact with others, please consider signing up for at least one other way of reaching out to each other in our church family. For a limited period of time we will have small groups—using Zoom technology—that focus on prayer, Bible study, or a movie discussion.

We are regularly thinking of new kinds of mission opportunities for us as a congregation. We will share those on Mondays. But please reach out to your neighbors and to those in this congregation. Help them experience joy and hope during this time.



Along with everything else, use your time wisely. Please see the article in this newsletter on mental health. We don't drift toward holiness or toward healthy behavior. Both require constant reminders of who we are called to be. Psalm 27:4-5 is a beautiful aspirational statement: "One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock." Stay grounded in these changing times.

With peace and blessings,
Pastor Craig

WORSHIP EACH SUNDAY / ONLINE AT 11
LENTEN SERMON SERIES:
I AM: 7 STATEMENTS DECLARING WHO JESUS IS TO US

Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus' identity is gradually revealed. An incident happens, he is seen from a new angle, and then he refers to himself with one of seven self-referential metaphors, making statements such as "I am the bread of life," or "I am the true vine," or "I am the good shepherd." Join us as we see together how each of these statements highlights how Jesus responds to our deepest needs.



Mar. 22: Jesus as the Light of the World

(John 8:12; Matthew 5:14-16)

Mar. 29: Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life

(John 14:1-18; Matthew 21:1-11)

Apr. 5: Jesus as the Bread of Life

(John 6:35-60)

Apr. 12: Easter Sunday: Jesus as the Resurrection

(John 11:7-27; Mark 16:1-8)



Worship each Sunday is streamed, so please watch online (and please share helpful input as we try something so new). Join Craig, Catherine, Bob, and Roger for a 30- to 40- minute service. During Lent, expect to see people putting Lent crosses on the tree. Know that there will be occasional soloists or musicians joining worship. And also see some new approaches to worship (e.g., dialogue sermons, prayers shared through texts during the service, etc.). We encourage you to invite friends to join us!

The service will be streamed starting at 11 a.m. You can access the streaming from the home page of our website (<https://spcnorfolk.org>), under the Livestream section (it is toward the bottom of the page, next to the photo of the church). Click the button that says "worship video."

WITHOUT COMMUNION . . .

1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." When you use the Second Presbyterian mug, hopefully you read those words and remember them. We may be separated from others at this time, but whatever food you eat, whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.



TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Your gifts to Second Presbyterian matter now more than ever. Our expenses continue, and we won't be passing offering plates on Sunday. If you are able to mail in your pledge or offering, that would be very much appreciated. (Soon there will be a link to online giving on the home page of the church website). Your generosity in this time makes a big difference.

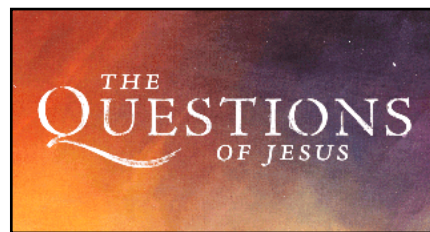
LENT WEDNESDAY DIALOGUES: THE QUESTIONS OF JESUS

Being Equipped through Scripture, Music, and Prayer

STREAMED LIVE EACH WEDNESDAY, 6:30-7:15 p.m.

Throughout the gospels Jesus frequently asks his disciples questions. Sometimes the questions are striking, sometimes simple, sometimes shocking. But we also are called today to think about these questions that Jesus addresses to us. Each week during Lent, we at Second are focusing on these questions. Please join us each Wednesday for a meaning-filled, and fun, event together.

The program begins at 6:30 p.m. You can access the streaming from the homepage of our website (<https://spcnorfolk.org>), under the Livestream section (it is toward the bottom of the page, next to the photo of the church). Click the button that says "worship video."



MARCH 25: *Worry, Fear, Scripture and Hope* (Craig Wansink, Bob Shoup, & Catherine Hart Monroe)

"Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your lifespan?" (Matthew 6:27)

APRIL 1: *For Those Who Want to Believe But Have Challenges* (Craig Wansink, Bob Shoup, & Catherine Hart Monroe)

"Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25)

APRIL 8: *Jesus in Film and Our Response in Faith* (Craig Wansink, Bob Shoup, & Catherine Hart Monroe)

*"My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?"
(Matt 27:46)*

SMALL GROUPS FOR PEOPLE TO STAY CONNECTED

The following small groups will meet using Zoom technology (which works either on a computer or on a cell phone), through teleconferencing, or in person. If you are interested in participating in one or more of these groups, please reach out to the contact person for each.

A TIME OF PRAYER

We are inviting those who are interested to join in a special time of prayer at noon Sundays. It may last 10 minutes, or it may last 20. We gather to raise concerns, to orient ourselves to God's will, and to reflect on how God could and should be moving within us. (If interested, contact Katie White at kkerr12@spcnorfolk.org or 615-8728.)

A BIBLE STUDY: BEMA (with Claire Ficker)

The Greek word "bema" refers to a platform or pulpit from which people spoke. The BEMA Podcast is a walk-through of the context of the Bible and the Text itself, as well as surrounding history. Before we come together, listen to a 45-minute podcast and then join us as we talk through the Bible and its deeper meaning. This will meet on Thursday evenings, 7:00-7:40 p.m. (If interested, contact Claire Ficker at clairevficker@gmail.com or 777-8648.)

FAITH AND FILM

Every other week we will watch a film on our own (through NetFlix, AmazonPrime, or another service) and then gather through Zoom to discuss it and its relevance to our faith. Participants will decide together the films they will see and when they will meet. (If interested in this kind of opportunity or discussion, contact Craig Wansink at cwansink@vwu.edu or 412-7467.)

BS4 LENTEN BIBLE STUDY:

An update from Joe Morgan, group leader: As expected, Donna confirms Sentara Village is protecting residents by limiting visitors. So our next visit date will be rescheduled as COVID-19 fizzles out. There remains an opportunity to gather for scripture, songs and support on Wednesdays at noon for all interested and available. The gathering can be in person or virtual. Please contact Joe Morgan (jnmorgan18@gmail.com) for information on teleconferencing by phone.

ESSENTRICS EXERCISE CLASS

As of right now, the Essentrics exercise class will continue to meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Specific precautions will be taken to ensure safe social distancing is maintained. Please contact leader Peggy Troyer about those precautions (alkatoma@netzero.com).

UP TO DATE COMMUNICATION & THE 2020 DIRECTORY

We need to be sure that we have up-to-date contact information (phone, email, home address) for you. Please be in contact if any of those should change.

Once completely updated, **Katie White will email out a 2020 directory with updated text information.** The directory photograph day will be rescheduled with Dave Ferraro when the church is able to gather again.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

- *Might you be willing to reach out and phone others during this time?*
- *Might you be willing to do outside work at the church (e.g. spreading mulch or painting lines in the parking lot)?*
- *Might you be willing to pick up groceries or medications, or run errands, for those who cannot get out?*
- *Might you be willing to engage in unique mission opportunities?*



If so, please be aware of announcements in our weekly, Monday emails. In the meantime, please look around you and see the needs.

Perhaps you could:

- *Provide childcare for healthcare workers whose kids are out of school*
- *Prepare meals for children and families in need*
- *Walk a dog for elderly neighbors*
- *Offer to pick up food and supplies for those most at risk and leave it at their doorstep, or have it delivered*
- *Call or text people in your neighborhood or in the church directory to check in on them and keep them company*
- *Teach someone how to Zoom if they've never done it*
- *Offer words of hope for those dealing with anxiety and depression*
- *Support local businesses through ordering out as you are able*
- *When you need to go shopping, ask workers as to how they are and tell them you will be praying for their safety*
- *Pray for all of the most vulnerable*
- *Invite people to join us for worship, for Wednesday evening R&Rs, or to be a part of our online small groups*

Pray for us as we are given unique opportunities in this time of crisis. Pray for understanding to know what God is wanting to use this crisis for and how to get in step with God's purpose.

ARE YOU SICK?

Let us know if you are—or know someone who is—currently in self-quarantine, sick, or feeling isolated. Please contact the pastors of the church (Craig's cell: 412-7467, email: cwansink@vwu.edu or Catherine's cell: 287-9897, email: revcat@spcnorfolk.org)

PLEASE JOIN US IN USING ZOOM TECHNOLOGY



If any of us had ever thought of global pandemics, those thoughts were filled more with zombies and hazmat suits than with the tedium of staying home. So much is changing each day. Part of what that means is that we need to do things differently at Second. Weekly worship is a given; we are so blessed to be able to stream each week.

In addition, however, we have other opportunities to reach out in fellowship, study, mission, and caring in new ways. One off those ways is through Zoom technology. In short, Zoom is like a conference call where you can see everyone else in the conference. The screen looks kind of like the Hollywood Squares or the Brady Bunch. Teddy, Katrina, and I tried it together for the very first time, and all of us found it very easy to use and understand. Catherine Hart Monroe has used it and has found it to be very helpful. My wife, Nancy, uses it and loves it. Kevin Kittredge wrote me and said, "Zoom is a great thing. My sister raves about using it, especially right now. She is in sales and her company has essentially mandated all meetings during this time be done with Zoom."

It requires just a couple of minutes of preparation to set up an account, and I encourage you to set up an account so it is easier to communicate face-to-face.

Either on your phone or computer, go to <https://zoom.us>
(I recommend using a computer, because that way the picture is bigger. My kids used their phones.)

Where it says "enter your work email," do so, and then hit "sign up for free."

Then go to your email account. Zoom will send you an email within a minute or two. That email's subject line will be "Please activate your Zoom account."

Click activate account.

That will take you to a page where you list your name and pick a password to continue.

Then click continue.

That will take you to a page where you invite colleagues to also create a page. You don't have to do anything there. Just hit "skip this step".

And then you will have your Zoom account ready. If your account is ready, someone can send you an email, inviting you to a meeting, and then all you have to do is click on the link in the email (and if you don't want to click on it, you don't have to).

Please note: If you KNOW that you will be invited to a Zoom meeting and haven't heard from anyone, you may need/want to check your junk/span folder on your computer!

IF you have any questions about setting up a Zoom account, please call Craig at 757-412-7467.

MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE DURING THIS TIME

Some of you know that Fred and Sandy Simmermon's son, Jeff, is a comedian and storyteller in New York City. What I (Craig) most appreciate about his humor is the humanity in it. Recently I saw his reflections on this last week. He wrote, *"I know that everyone's jobs have dried up and their money's gone, but since I'm in isolation, it's only happening to me. Social media's getting in my head even more than usual and for something that I really really kind of hate, I sure do check in on it a lot."*

When we face a superabundance of empty time, when it involves tension and concerns, and when it doesn't involve face-to-face contact, our minds can land in the wrong places.

This week an article in *UVA Today* struck me as particularly thoughtful. The article—titled "How to Protect Your Mental Health During a Quarantine"—acknowledges that one of the biggest challenges of quarantine is to our mental health. Dr. Claudia Allen writes, *"While telecommuting initially sounds like an unplanned vacation, in reality, isolation, lack of schedule and not enough to do are a foolproof recipe for depression. Luckily, the scientific literature on wellness and mood informs us what will help us avoid depression (and thrive) if stuck at home."*

I encourage you to read the article. It is very good. In short, she offers concrete suggestions:



- **Get Dressed** (Don't give in to the immediate urge to sleep in and stay up late. Set your alarm for your usual time and stick with your morning routine.)
- **If Telecommuting, Stick with Your Routine** (Be proactive and lay out an intentional structure for your day. If you're telecommuting, stick with your usual worktimes or something similar.)
- **Plan Out Your Week** (Have a schedule for the week as well. Make weekends somewhat different, even if that means something simple.)
- **Go Outside** (Exercise, sunlight and being around trees all benefit mood.)
- **Be Intentional** (Use any extra time very intentionally; don't drift through the weeks. Plan to come out of this quarantine with a new skill or hobby.)
- **Beware of Too Much Social Media** (Be careful of just surfing and spending time on social media. Use those kinds of social media that lead to meaningful connections. Plan weekly or even daily group video chats with friends, family, neighbors, or colleagues.)
- **Be a Helper** (Helping others is a known mood-booster.)
- **Spread Out** (Create some space between those cohabitating. Mimic this at home by intentionally planning "together time" (meals, watching movies) and "separate time" in separate rooms, if possible (working, reading, learning).)
- **Shift Your Mental Space** (Use principles of mindfulness to shift your mental stance from frustration about the situation to curiosity. Taking on this stance will give you a little distance, which can reduce distress, as well as keep you open to the positive or simply interesting things that may happen during this very unusual experience.)

OFFICE HOURS/CHURCH GATHERING POLICIES

Please note, in compliance with social distancing, ***the church office will not be open regularly at this time.*** If you need to reach Katie White for administrative needs, please email her at kkerr12@spcnorfolk.org, or call her cell at 757-615-8728. For pastoral needs, please contact the pastors and they will arrange a time to meet with you, (Craig's cell: 412-7467, email: cwansink@vwu.edu or Catherine's cell: 287-9897, email: revcat@spcnorfolk.org).

At this time, ***the church will be following government recommendations for social distancing.*** Therefore, small gatherings will be allowed at church if there are 10 people or fewer present, group members maintain six feet apart, the members do not have a fever or cold-like symptoms, and it is ***strongly encouraged*** anyone who has been around someone with symptoms stay home from small group gatherings (as it is possible to transmit COVID-19 before symptoms occur). All groups sponsored by the church, as well as outside groups who use the church, will be following these recommendations in order to use our building. If at any time this policy changes, the church will be informed!

Everyone please stay safe and healthy!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

NURSERY SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 12:15 p.m.:

Starting March 29, each Sunday the nursery-aged children will have the opportunity to Zoom in with Amanda Besso and Michelle Milton for their weekly Sunday school lesson!

TIME FOR KIDS

Each week parents of kids will receive an email video, or suggestions, or something that will help during this time. Sometimes the email will include a helpful article, sometimes an interesting video, sometimes a video from a church member, or sometimes a mission opportunity from home. We look forward to you helping us think together during this new time.

PWSJC CHILDREN'S MEETINGS:

Currently our DCM Amanda Besso is investigating the best medium and time for the children of the church to be able to connect virtually. Please look out for emails with details.

PWSJC YOUTH TEXTING GROUP:

Starting this week Katie White will start a youth texting group to keep the youth connected to each other during this time. This group will allow the youth to check in on each other, receive motivational thoughts, scripture, and devotional texts, and allow virtual games (like Bible Trivia!). Katie will also investigate the possibility of utilizing Zoom to facilitate meetings with the group if the youth would like to try them.

RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO STAY CONNECTED THROUGH TECHNOLOGY: HERE IS SOME LANGUAGE & A QUICK REFERENCE

- **Our Website:** <https://spcnorfolk.org>
- **Our Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/secondpresbyteriannorfolk/>
- **Livestream:** This term refers to a video being streamed live on our website. You can access this feature on our home page, under the livestream section, click the worship video button.
- **Zoom:** This is videoconference technology that allows you to see everyone else in the conference. This is how the church will conduct small groups. You will need an email to be able to participate. See the article above with steps to set up Zoom!

For those who do NOT have access to technology, we still want to stay connected with you! Please notify the office (Katie White @ 615-8728) if you do not have access to technology, and we can discuss other means to stay connected.

There is definitely a place for YOU at Second Presbyterian!

Sunday

Online worship @ 11 a.m. via livestream (go to streaming on our homepage)
Prayer Meeting via Zoom @ Noon

Monday

Monday Reflection & Announcement Email

Tuesday

Essentrics Exercise Class in person @ 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Wednesday

BS4 Lenten Bible Study in person or teleconferencing @ Noon
Lenten Wednesdays via Livestream @ 6:30 p.m.

Thursday

Essentrics Exercise Class @ 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
BEMA Bible Study via Zoom @ 7 p.m.

Holy Week and Easter Plans

As it seems unlikely the church will be able to gather during Holy Week, the staff is currently adjusting initial Holy Week and Easter plans.

Please look out for more information soon on what to expect for them!

April Birthdays

- April 1 David Ferraro
- April 1 Angelo Torre
- April 3 Roger Phelps
- April 5 Mark Stearns
- April 6 Steven Bull
- April 7 Roy Graeber
- April 14 Sheila Eley
- April 19 Suellen White
- April 25 Arlene Baragona
- April 26 Helen Pribesh
- April 26 Lori Crouch
- April 26 Mike O'Brian
- April 27 Bill Ruehlmann
- April 30 John Sawyer

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