



Presbytery of Yukon

April 21, 2021

From Rev. Curt Karns

In previous articles, I have written that we need to care for four areas of our lives if we are to maintain spiritual health: worship, study, service and fellowship. If there is one thing that the COVID crisis has done, it has given many of us a great deal of personal time, which some of us may have used to develop the personal aspect of these spiritual foundations to a new level—which is a good thing. However, we also need to care for these four areas of spiritual health in social ways. For most of us, the COVID restrictions have truly hampered the social aspect of our spiritual lives. Today, therefore, I want to write specifically about this, the social aspect of spiritual health.



Christian fellowship is essential if we are to avoid becoming self-centered in our spiritual life, or if we are to avoid spiritually wasting away due to spiritual isolation. Any serious reading of the Bible prohibits walling ourselves off in private spiritual cocoons. The Bible tells us we are each members of a complex body that needs the service of all its members; that we are fellow siblings of Christ and members together in the great family of God; and that wherever two or more are gathered in Christ's name our Lord is there with them in a particular, and essential way. We need a social spiritual emphasis to complement our personal faith if we are to maintain spiritual health.

Spiritual isolation has been a serious issue in these COVID times, and has resulted in a huge increase in personal suffering.^[1] These are not just my observations. There are reams of articles and studies reporting to us how bad it has been for so many over the past year.^[2] Nearly all of them point to a huge increase in alcohol consumption and other drug abuse, as well as radical increases in domestic violence, depression, anxiety, family stress and much more.

Probably all of us have seen news reporting how the effects of these COVID-enhanced problems particularly affect people of color, and other marginalized populations that lack some of the privileges more readily available to other populations. That being said, no one can claim to be unaffected, since the studies show that nearly all population groups are suffering at historic levels. Indeed, many of us count our own family members, and maybe even ourselves among the suffering.

The good news is that we have a Savior in Jesus Christ, and that our Lord has sent the Holy Spirit to stand with us, and to empower us for ministry together. It is time for us to rededicate ourselves to the ministry of caring

for the lost, the wounded, and the heartbroken.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has been calling on churches to adopt Matthew 25:31-46 as our theme for this time. They are asking us to become a Matthew 25 presbytery, and for our church sessions to officially become Matthew 25 congregations. When we stand before the Lord at Judgment Day, we should hear what Jesus quotes in Matthew 25:34-36, 40

³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me....⁴⁰Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

This will be something of a heavy lift for many of us. We have just spent a year of enforced isolation, and that means we have lost the habits that brought us together in ways that fed our own souls, as well as others. Not only that, but it is nearly certain that we do not want to go back to exactly the same way things were. This is a time to rebuild our own spiritual lives, and to rebuild our churches and their ministries in ways that fit our world better.

We need to dedicate ourselves to this task. We need to figure out how to get out of our shell to reach out to others suffering from isolation poisoning. People suffering from depression, anxiety, substance abuse and violence are the ones most likely not to get involved in new things. Yet, we know many of these people. We need to call them—a phone call is a lifeline for some. We also need to invite them into the ministries that can help bring them to health.

It is my hope that you are already doing these things. If so, send us a line. How is God inspiring you and your church in these transitional days to care for one another, to reach out to others right now, and to plan new efforts that bring good news to hurting souls?

[1] In the 40-odd years of my adult life, families have suffered a huge decrease in spiritual cohesiveness. More and more Christians find it difficult to practice healthy spirituality in the home, because their family members will not join with them. This means that spiritual isolation, and its ills, have been a growing problem, even before COVID.

[2] Let me list a link to one such study: <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/#:~:text=Older%20adults%20are%20also%20more,prior%20to%20the%20current%20crisis>



Carter E. Harms

Sunday Worship in the Presbytery

As more people are receiving the vaccine, more churches are putting together their COVID-19 Mitigation plans, allowing their churches to open for in-person worship. The Presbytery of Yukon has asked sessions to vote on a Mitigation Plan before reopening for in-person worship, noting that different communities have differing safety needs at different times. At this time, this is the information the presbytery office has on churches reopening their doors to worshipers on Sunday mornings.



Church	Community	Time	Mode of Worship
Immanuel Presb. Church	Anchorage	11:00 a.m.	Fcbk Children's Moments, & email home worship helps
First Presb. Church	Anchorage	11:00 a.m.	Livestream via Facebook-live
Anchor Presb. Church	Anchorage	10:00 a.m.	Call for Zoom Link to online worship.
Jewel Lake Parish	Anchorage	9:30 a.m.	Livestream via Facebook-live
First Korean Presb. Church	Anchorage	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary Worship
Trinity Presb. Church	Anchorage	10:30 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, and livestreamed on Facebook-live
Eagle River Presb. Church	Eagle River	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, and livestreamed on Facebook-live
United Protestant Presb. Church	Palmer	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, and livestreamed on Facebook-live
First Presb. Church	Wasilla	10:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, and livestreamed on Facebook-live
Delta Junction Presb./Faith Luth	Delta Jct.	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, call for a zoom link to join online
University Community Presb.	Fairbanks	10:30 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, posted to web site and YouTube
Fairbanks Korean Presb. Church	Fairbanks	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship
New Hope UMC PC(USA) Church	North Pole	10:30 a.m.	Zoom Link available at http://www.nhmcp.com/
Gambell Presb. Church	Gambell	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship.
Savoonga Presb. Church	Savoonga	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship
Chapel in the Mts.	Anaktuvuk P	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship
Olgonik Presb. Church	Wainwright	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship
Atqasuk Chapel	Atqasuk	11:00 a.m.	No information
Utqiagvik Presb. Church	Utqiagvik	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship, livestreamed @ Facebk & YouTube
Kuukpik Presb. Church	Nuiqsut	11:00 a.m.	Sanctuary worship
Kaktovik Presb. Church	Kaktovik	11:00 a.m.	No information

Earth Day

*The Lord God placed the human creature in the garden of Eden to tend it and to protect it. **Genesis 2:15***

Earth Day is celebrated on April 22 of every year. Traditionally, Earth Day events are celebrated in the week during which Earth Day falls. These are the earth day schedules we know about in communities within the presbytery.

Increasingly, Christians are realizing that caring for God's creation is a major part of God's intention for humanity, which has caused more and

more Christians, and more and more churches, to join in the celebration of Earth Day.

Anchorage Region

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APR

2021 Earth Day Challenge Run/Walk - Anchorage

Apr 1 – 30

Alaska Housing Finance Corpora...
Anchorage, AK



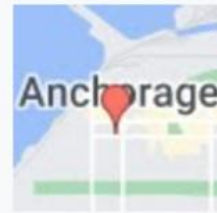
23

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Global Leaders, Alaskan Impacts

Fri, 1 – 2 PM

The Alaska Center, 707 A St Ste ...
Anchorage, AK



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UAA at the Movies: Dr. Seuss' The Lorax

Thu, 7 PM

Century 16 and XD, 301 E 36th Ave
Anchorage, AK



Celebrate Earth Week In Fairbanks

April 17th-April 24th



April 22nd, Howl At Noon!

Get outside, howl, and raise a ruckus for the earth! Tell your neighbors and friends!



April 18th-24th Five Senses Meditation Walk

The Interior Alaska Land Trust is setting up an interpretive trail to celebrate the senses at the Chinook Conservation Park! This two-mile walking trail loops along the banks of Cripple Creek, restored to its original streambed after 80 years by the Interior Alaska Land Trust.



April 17-25th Poetry and Art Walk

Displayed along the trails at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge & along the Chena River Walk downtown Fairbanks. Include your poetry and art by sending it to PoetryArtWalk2021@gmail.com



Wild Species Video Parade

The Species Walk goes virtual! The Children's Museum is providing mask making kits to make into your favorite species! Make a mask, take a photo, & send it to blackdog@ptialaska.net by April 18th and be included in the video parade on Channel 11 news on April 22nd.



Saturday April 24th, 12-3pm Earth Day Celebration at Pioneer Park

Activities for Families, Seed Planting and More! Outside at the Folk School Co- sponsored by Calypso Farms & The Fairbanks Folk School



All Week: Watch the film Kiss the Ground

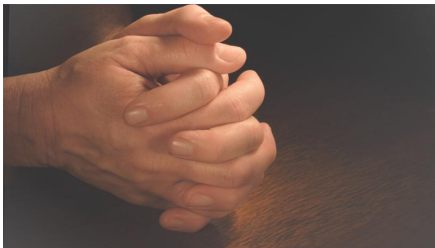
A new film how about how regenerating the world's soils has the potential to rapidly stabilize Earth's climate, restore lost ecosystems, and create abundant food supplies. Link at bit.ly/earthweek2021



MORE INFORMATION AT [BIT.LY/EARTHWEEK2021](https://bit.ly/earthweek2021)



Prayer Requests



The family of Virginia Kasak in the loss of her sister, Susie Itta. And also pray for her brother, Mike Toovak, and for Virgie and her ministry in Nuiqsut.

Mark Your Calendars

Later in 2021

The Next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery
Location TBD

616 W. 10th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-276-0914



www.pbyukon.org