



# Presbytery of Genesee Valley

1049 WEGMAN ROAD • ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14624 • (585) 242-0080  
WEBSITE: [www.pbygenva.org](http://www.pbygenva.org)

April 4, 2020

Dear Pastors and Churches of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley,

In Douglas McKelvey's extraordinary book of liturgies ***Every Moment Holy*** (Rabbit Room Press, 2017) he shares a prayer for Medical Providers. As those who are called upon in these challenging days to offer comfort to the anxious and the Balm of Gilead to the afflicted, we can perhaps join "medical" with "ministry". In part McKelvey offers this:

*"O Christ Our Healer, there is no end to malady, sickness, injury, and disease in this broken world, so there is no end to the line of hurting people who daily need my tending. Therefore give me Grace, O God, that I might be generous with my kindness, and that in this healing and care-taking vocation my hands might become an extension of your hands, and my service a conduit for your mercy...Let me practice medicine because you are a healing God who feels compassion and extends mercy. Let me practice medicine because you are near to those who are in need, to those who face grief and loss. Let me practice medicine as a willing servant of your redemption, pushing back - by means of my vocation - the effects of the fall. Let my presence in this place lend a human face to your compassion...I can do none of these things on my own. Apart from your grace, I have no grace to give. So give me your grace in greater measure, O Lord."*

May grace in great measure be given to you all. Thank you for your care, creativity, resolve and resilience in this season of life and ministry.

The very first Holy Week was a time of deep uncertainty, struggle, faithful improvisation, and extraordinary examples of commitment, grace, and love. Every day was a new and serious challenge, and every day offered a stunning display of God's love through Jesus our Christ. Humbly entering Jerusalem and powerfully overturning the tables of injustice. Teaching in word and deed about the highest priority of loving God and neighbor. Serving others and giving of himself in the first Last Supper. Ending reactive violence and the power of death by submitting to the cross. And then, past the dark days of uncertainty, rising again in glory breaking the power of sin and death. It is the perfect time for us all to journey through Holy Week again.

While much remains uncertain, our ministry remains as a Presbytery. These are unfamiliar times, but your Leadership Team and Presbytery Committees remain hard at work helping to shape our response and next steps in service. We are looking forward to our first **Virtual Special Presbytery Meeting on Saturday, April 25 at 10:00 a.m.** Details about how to connect and participate will be coming soon. We are shaping committee responsibilities/opportunities and staffing expectations to best serve in this season. We are seeking to resource you all will many

options for worship designs, mission service, and institutional support. Please check out the Presbytery website for many excellent links and materials. Two new opportunities may be of special interest right now.

- If you are looking for an opportunity to celebrate Easter with the larger Body of Christ, the PCUSA is offering an Easter Service <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/4/1/online-easter-celebration-be-released-april-9/>
- The [CARES emergency relief act](#) may have provisions and options that can be of financial support during this time. We are not experts in the details and requirements of this policy, but do encourage you to look into it with those who are. We have compiled resources for you on the Presbytery website. There may be some assistance available for staffing costs and the like.

We would also commend for your consideration some thoughts on how to handle stewardship in a pandemic. This resource has been shared by Bryce Wiebe, Director of Special Offerings, with input from all the Mission Engagement Advisors (PCUSA). Please see the attached document.

Most of all, we walk together an uncertain path with a sure and certain hope. There is nothing in life or death, nothing on the news or our social media feeds, nothing in a virus or broken political systems, nothing in our tears or moments of doubt, that can separate us from the love of God through Jesus Christ. He is risen. We are a resurrection people. He is risen indeed.

In Christ,

Rev. Sue Thaine, Convener of Big Picture Team

Elder Roger Estes, Moderator of Presbytery of Genesee Valley

Rev. Colin Pritchard, Moderator-Elect of Presbytery of Genesee Valley

Elder Susan Orr, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley