

RICHMOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Deep with God, Wide with the World

Session Notes – July 2021

These will be among the shortest and happiest session notes I have written.

We had spent time at the June 23 meeting planning a gradual return to live worship based on the restrictions at that time. Shortly after, Dr. Henry announced Phase 3, which, despite continued limitations on other kinds of events, lifted virtually every constraint on worship gatherings.

Not wanting to wait to the end of the month for our regular July meeting, session met specially on July 5, and we discussed how RPC would respond to the surprising and welcome news. Here is a summary:

- the originally-planned limited, gradual return to live worship beginning Jul 11 as previously announced will not happen
- instead, we will return to full in-person worship starting SUNDAY, AUGUST 1
- however, we will maintain some precautions for now
 - o please do not attend if you are feeling unwell (health questionnaire no longer required) both for your own sake and for the sake of our brothers and sisters in Christ
 - o we encourage you to wear a mask for worship itself – this is due to the high risk of aerosol spread from singing, and we want to sing!
 - o Munch and Mingle will be a snack of individually-wrapped items, and coffee/tea will be poured by designated hosts – no mask required for M&M
 - o services will be live-streamed for those who wish to watch from home and they will also be archived online, so you can catch up later if you miss 10:00 am on Sunday
 - o however, it will be some weeks or months until a proper hybrid ministry is developed, as this is a ministry aimed at fostering a new, on-line community and will require special resources and skills, and may well be a collaborative enterprise



Aug 1 seemed like the soonest we could reasonably start. All the remaining July sermons will be (or have already been) recorded because the preachers cannot be present. Maureen is away on holidays just now so it would be a challenge to prepare the ProPresenter slides. Plus, other things have to ramp up. So, Aug 1 will be the big celebration return.



Reminder of the Sundae Sunday, Jul 11, from 2:00-3:30 in the parking lot. And look for information on Walking Church, being arranged by Anne-Marie. First event at Terra Nova is also Jul 11, and there will be another in August.

Many things were not good for many people during the pandemic restrictions, but I would say RPC has done better than simply survived. We have discovered that our virtual reach is much wider than our in-person reach; we have learned new technologies and techniques; we have ordained an Assistant Minister; we have hired 3 new gifted staff members; we have seen that God was not restricted but in fact was teaching us new things. Retaining the best from both the old normal and from the pandemic

time, we are ready to shape a new normal with a refreshed appreciation of each other and of our role in God's redeeming work in the world.

*Faithfully,
Graeme Stager
Clerk of Session*

