



Christ Presbyterian Church, New Haven

CPC Covid-19 Update

12 May 2020

Dear CPC Family and Friends,

This morning in our pastor's prayer service we reflected on Psalm 28. I thought and prayed for you in my heart as we read

*To you, O LORD, I call; my rock, be not deaf to me,
lest, if you be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.
Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy, when I cry to you for help,
when I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary.*

I find it revealing that the Lord is at once our rock and our presence vis-à-vis his "most holy sanctuary." Clearly, Christ is the fulfillment of all this both as our rock and sanctuary. But isn't it interesting how ordinarily in ages past and present, Christ's sanctuary presence is "vis-à-vis" (that is mediated) through us all to one another as organized by Christ himself. This is the point of 1 Peter 2:5-6, "you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood...for it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone a cornerstone chosen and precious...."

True—Christ is the one and only cornerstone. But not true—Christ is alone our sanctuary. Rather, Christ is united to us all such as to complete the sanctuary of God in the reality of our experience. There is no "Lord my Rock" without "your most holy sanctuary." My point? I know we are all suffering from zoom fatigue. I know that the zoom media can as much make us feel estranged as present. And I know that the wooden, cumbersome, reality of not knowing how and when to speak, overcoming awkward freezes and intruding noises makes it "not fun." But... it is the closest we can get right now to that holy sanctuary and is the best way we can be there for one another as to mediate Christ our rock into our lives. Please don't forsake those cumbersome attempts of being the church STILL assembled, even if virtually, during this difficult season. Perhaps you don't feel the need, but you need it. And perhaps you don't know it, but my bet is someone you love does! I especially encourage you to participate in our Wednesday AM or PM prayer services.

On another note, last night at our weekly session meeting we passed the following overtures:

- 1) *To allow CPC members to designate CPC donations to "Clinton Ave. Neighborhood Ministry" (a.k.a "Patty's Ministry")*
- 2) *To coordinate members as interested to "adopt" families in the Clinton Ave. Neighborhood per Patty's recommendation.*

As we heard about a couple of Sundays ago, Patty Chuchta has unique access to many of the mostly Spanish speaking immigrants and refugees living in the Fair Haven area of New Haven. She knows of several families who are shut-in and in need of assistance in such things as grocery delivery, encouragement, prayer, and help in connecting to other needed resources and jobs that might be available through our city and other agencies. All money given to CPC as designated to "Clinton Ave. Ministry" will be used to purchase groceries and other needs relative to the people of this neighborhood. Using "Clinton Ave. Ministry" in the memo field, you may write a check or donate online (write in the designation under Special Projects): <https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=3bc0a4>. Also, with Patty's assistance, we will pair

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those of you who might be interested with a specific family such as to deliver groceries to them, or to provide other assistance as able. All of this will be done of course in a way that is respecting sanitation and social distancing best practices. There are also ways we can overcome the language barrier if needed. If you are interested, please contact our Operations Coordinator Annie McHugh (annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org).

Let's all pray that the barrier of isolation that is the common experience in a community like this may be broken by the Gospel love of Christ *through us!* And may God continue to bless you, the people of CPC, God's holy sanctuary presence in our city!

I am yours most affectionately in Christ,

Preston Graham