



THE PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

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November 13, 2020

Dear PSNE Congregational Leadership,

Grace and Peace to you in this season!

We are writing on behalf of the Committee on Ministry to thank you and your congregation for its incredible faithfulness during this unprecedented time of a global health pandemic which has brought ongoing and unexpected challenges to all of us. We recognize that your ministry has had to shift in ways that were not necessarily desired and that this has placed an incredible burden upon you and your leaders. Across the Presbytery, we have watched in awe and thankfulness as each of our congregations has risen to the challenge and grown in new ways.

The overwhelming feedback we hear from worship leaders is around the sheer exhaustion of putting together weekly worship for the virtual space and finding enough time for personal respite and spiritual renewal. At our November Meeting of the COM, we voted unanimously and enthusiastically to offer **two complete worship services for December 27, 2020 and January 3, 2021 (including virtual communion) which will be led by our General Presbyter.** These services will be available online via the PSNE website, including a bulletin and worship materials, on December 20 so that you will have time to share them. In doing this, the COM wants to strongly encourage your Session to give your pastor (and other worship staff) **these two Sundays off with pay without impacting their vacation and continuing education time.**

As a Presbytery, we have continued to work to find ways to support and resource you in this time. Our Covid-19 resource page on the PSNE website remains active and frequently updated. We especially highlight an opportunity for learning about liturgy for the Advent and Christmas Season on November 23 with the Rev. Dr. Claudio Carvalhaes of our Presbytery which will be hosted by the Synod of the Northeast. Information for that can be accessed at this [link](#).

We hope that this gift from the COM to you for the post-Christmas season will be one you will able to utilize as you continue to build stamina for this time that we are in. If there are other ways we can be in support of you, and ideas you have, please share them at any time, we are always open to feedback.

You, your ministry, and your community remain in our prayers, we are always here to support you.

Blessings and Peace,
Rev. Candice Whitman and Elder Clare Shimpf, co-chairs of the COM
Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo, General Presbyter
Rev. David Baer, Stated Clerk