

NOTES FROM THE ARLINGTON DS – 5/5/2020

My thought for this week: Take a deep breath! We've got this!

Lots of anxiety showing up in our system this week. I have been praying for you all by name, and connecting where I can between endless zoom meetings. I've ALMOST been grateful for the fact that someone pretended to be me this week seeking gift cards (hopefully no one fell for that!) so that I get a chance to connect with many of you! Email, text or call if you need anything or want to check in.

We are closing in on yet another opportunity for change and decisions and new things as we begin phased opening in the next month. – So please take the opportunity to rest, think, consider what you can and cannot do. It's okay – you are enough!

1. NEW UPDATES:

- a. The Bishop announced that each District Superintendent would be offering a worship service or sermon for use May 17th to give our excellent and tired clergy a rest. Please note: This is **OPTIONAL** – use it, if you would like. Here are the many details:
 - i. We will offer you this next Tuesday in a DropBox, each separate and also one together:
 1. A welcome to worship
 2. A call to worship
 3. A prayer, leading to the Lord's Prayer
 4. A reading of the scripture
 5. A sermon:
 - a. Scripture: John 14:15-21
 - b. Title: Love Connections
 - c. The metaphor and imagery I will be using is trees, if that is helpful to your thinking or planning
 6. A stewardship moment
 7. A benediction in praise of the work of the church in this time
 - ii. You should be able to upload the desired piece or pieces and use in your ZOOM call, YouTube recording, FB posting, etc.
 - iii. I will be premiering the whole on FB and/or YouTube at 9 AM on Sunday, May 17th, if that is helpful to you all; details to follow. Remember – the recording won't have any music, so trust me – it won't compete! But some of our churches may have trouble with the format of pre-recording, so I thought this might help.
- b. Cabinet is working on an opening protocol for the Conference – we hope to have these out to you so you can prepare for possible church openings. Even though the Governor is allowing some non-essential businesses to open May 17th – that isn't us, yet. Expect something early next week looking at a phased in plan for our churches. This will mean some loosening of childcare/daycare restrictions (not preschools), so stay tuned.

- c. National Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 7th – the Conference is putting out something from the Bishop that day, so look out for it.
- d. The Bishop says that churches can be a site for the June elections: but not the May municipal elections, like the local Fairfax City one's going on. I know some of you are polling places – so June is good, May is not.

2. REMINDERS:

- a. Cynthia Lopynski from our office is offering mystery worshipers for your online services – contact her at cynthialopynski@vaumc.org
- b. Kim Johnson continues to do digital communications consultations – <https://calendly.com/kimjohnson-vaumc/church-communications-consultation>
- c. The CARES Act's small business support, PPP, was re-funded - don't stop the process at your local bank or the Virginia Credit Union.
- d. We would like to see all clergy evaluations & parsonage inspections to the District office by June 20th. You can do these by video if need be.

3. RESOURCES:

- a. <https://novaumc.org/covid-19/>
- b. Vaumc.org

- 4. Arlington Clergy Zoom Meeting Thursdays at 3:00** for the duration of this season. This is always optional, but if you want the latest news and some encouragement, join us. Same invite as before:

<https://zoom.us/j/434526053>

Sarah