


REFORMED CHURCH CENTER AT NEW BRUNSWICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



Here are the pertinent portions of the chat during tonight's "Social Distancing & the Supper" on-line gathering. "Thank you"s, affirmations, Amens, and questions/comments that got made aloud in the discussion have not been included.

From Abby Norton-Levering :

I liked Mashona's reading so much, and the theology in it, that I wonder why some people need to bring the elements at all? I am uncomfortable with setting up a situation where some have elements and some do not. Isn't this exactly the situation described in one of the letters to the Corinthians?

From Elizabeth Estes :

So, Matthew, why couldn't we each participate in our own homes. Each "home" participating. It would be like World Communion Sunday....

From Shawn Abbas :

Please comment on the appropriateness of praying for the Spirit to impart God's grace to His people in the absence of actually celebrating the sacrament.

From Monica Schaap Pierce :

Matthew, do you think it is MOST difficult for Reformed folks (among our ecumenical partners/siblings) to approve of a virtual Lord's Supper given the Calvinist insistence upon the extra calvinisticum?

From NBTS :

The reading Mashona Walston mentioned, "Empty Hands", is by Thomas G. Pettepiece, from *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*, by Rueben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck.

From Devonna Cousins :

thanks for sharing the Empty Hands as we are having our worship thru conf-call and planning to share in distant communion but in wanting to stay safe we don't want anyone going out to purchase if they don't have the elements,

From Paul Janssen :

I'm planning (I think) of fasting from the liturgical, stylized-meal of the Lord's Supper, and instead hosting something like a love feast - as some colleagues are doing.

From Abby Norton-Levering :

Can we fast as a church body, and at the same time find ways to help individuals and families consider how all their meals together might not be sacraments, and nevertheless sacramental?

From Marla Rotman :

That's what I was thinking, too, Abby.

From Paul Janssen :

Can't find Eckhart on the list or I'd respond directly to him - but the substitution of the elements has long been a "thing" in mission settings.

From Sally Ann Castle :

In my context, the tech averse are included. Zoom and free conference call both include landline connections. I am snail-mailing all the materials for each Sunday's virtual worship to these individuals.

From Abby Norton-Levering :

One interesting wrinkle to this important question about whether choosing to use technology leaves some people out, is that many churches are having people participate online who can't ordinarily come in person. Shut-ins, people who've moved away, etc.

From Brenna Stanfield :

Abby—we have seen this as well, in that folks who aren't able to come to church physically are suddenly now able to participate more fully, and they are so grateful for it.

From Sally Ann Castle :

Yes. That's been my experience. Shut-ins and those who have moved away are very appreciative of being included. And want us to continue the connection after we return to the sanctuary

From Abby Norton-Levering :

At our church service on Sunday, we had a shut-in participate for the first time in years--because her kind nurse's aide dialed in on her iPad.

From David Groeneveld :

<https://www.musicthatmakescommunity.org/>

Music that make community seeks to encourage singing without paper, song responses, teaching each other.

From Monica SchaaP Pierce :

Here is a prayer for Handwashing during Covid-19 <https://psr.edu/a-liturgy-in-the-wake-of-the-coronavirus/>

From Sally Ann Castle :

The Doxology matches the appropriate hand-washing time-frame. Lots of YouTubes out there of this

From Brenna Stanfield :

The Lord's Prayer also takes just about 20 seconds to say...my kids and I timed it and it took us 20.4 seconds. So we've been praying the Lord's Prayer very frequently as we also frequently wash our hands and it's been very meaningful.

From David Ruisard :

I'm thinking we could follow a brief service with time for all of us to call those who are connected only by phone.

From Adam Perez :

a service from CRC worship ministries very akin to what Ron is suggesting: <https://network.crcna.org/worship/family-worship-together-meal>

From Ron Rienstra :

<https://www.barefoottheology.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Maundy-Thursdayv1.1.pdf>

From Sally Ann Castle :

We had a mixed group of Zoom participants and phone only people for Bible study last night. Oil was "passed" for anointing from one participant to another. I narrated so those listening but not seeing knew when it was their turn to name and bless the next person. It worked! It was the tech-averse who were so pleased to be included.

From Angela Stewart :

I think it is more about the communion and less about the elements

From Eric Nichols :

In this time of isolation, everyone is exploring ways to "be together" or to "connect with one another." We have this understanding that the Lord's Supper is one of the greatest moments when we are together with Christ and one another. Why would we not offer the Supper in such a time as this?

From Marla Rotman :

There are so many examples of when Christ himself made exemptions to the rules as a way of being pastoral to people, even individuals. I think we should keep this in mind as we wrestle with this question.

From Noah Morgan :

Speaking as a Presbyterian, it was confusing for a time but much clearer now

From Shawn Abbas :

Amen, Marla! It depends on where our hearts are and how we love our neighbors.

From Paul Janssen :

One of the things this experience is doing is setting a different post-COVID 19 standard. It will be interesting to see what happens.

From Micah McCreary :

This is such a leadership matter! We could offer an entire second conversation on the strength required to lead in challenging times such as this. Decision will need to be made immediately without the opportunity to sit together and dialogue.

From Noah Morgan :

Through the online worship, there have been many who have "attended" who we haven't seen in years. Not just homebound but those who have drifted from the church

From Paul Janssen :

The isolation is not only unfortunate and unnecessary. It is also profoundly de-humanizing, inasmuch as we do not exist as independent actors. Without "the other" we do not exist. I mean that literally.

From Joanne Van Sant :

yes, and how much does it contribute to attendance that there are no competing activities. Also advocating for those in the margins in group home - their ability to participate digitally is limited and dependent on the cooperation of staff

From Angela Stewart :

Best for all to use what they have in their own homes